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LAST ISSUE

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-96-150
Friday
2 August 1996

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Islamic Affairs

Political Islam Review: AL-SHA'B 23 Jul

NC0108210096

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 23 July edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper AL-SHA'B that pertain to political Islamic issues.

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11. Labor Party Leader Says Israelis Divided Arabs Through Peace

12. Labor Party Seminar Participants Demand Boycott of Israeli Goods
13. Writer Advocates Dialogue With Islamic Current in Arab World

POLITICAL PARTIES, FORCES REJECT 'ZIONIST ATTEMPTS' ON JERUSALEM

A 500-word report on pages one and eight says that "representatives of political parties and forces have rejected Zionist attempts to divide Jerusalem." They issued a statement claiming that the battle for Jerusalem is "a battle of sovereignty and belief that cannot be forfeited." They demanded that these attempts be confronted. The statement was signed by the heads of the Labor Party, the Naserite Arab Democratic Party, the Liberal Party, the Arab Party of Egypt, and others, and it was presented to Mustafa Mashhur, Counselor Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, and Sayf-al-Islam Hasan al-Banna, who also signed it. The statement condemns current developments in the region, "in particular, the Israeli prime minister's visit to Cairo," which was not welcomed by all forces. The representatives of the political parties and forces confirm that Jerusalem is Arab and Islamic and "announce their rejection of all Zionist settlement schemes in it and all proposed designs to tamper with these political, historic, and doctrinal matters." The statement concludes: "We are all required to protect the popular and official Palestinian institutions in the city because any attempt to change their status violates the international charters and agreements signed on this matter, which stipulate that the subject of Jerusalem should be postponed until the final-stage negotiations."

NATIONAL, POPULAR REACTIONS AGAINST NETANYAHU'S VISIT CONTINUE

Another 300-word report on page one notes that national and popular reactions rejecting the Israeli prime minister's visit to Cairo continue. Among those are the popular Egyptian parties and organizations committee for resisting normalization with the Zionist enemy, the Alexandria popular and national forces and parties committee, and the popular committee for resisting Zionism and boycotting Israel. They call on the Egyptian Government "to declare its categorical rejection of these policies, and adhere to the legitimate Arab rights and the recent resolutions of the Arab summit." They also call on the Arab governments to implement the Arab summit recommendations and resolutions and resist any attempts to violate them. In addition, they call on honest nationalists to realize the mutual objectives and serve the general interest.

AL-WASAT PARTY COURT TRIAL CONTINUES, POSTPONED UNTIL 29 JUL

A 300-word report on pages one and eight notes that the court hearing for 13 Muslim Brotherhood members, three of which are founders of al-Wasat Party, has been postponed till Monday, 29 July, to hear the defense's argument for defendant Hasan Judah, after the latter was released from the hospital. The other prisoners should also receive medical treatment the court told the military prosecution.

AL-AZHAR FATWA COMMITTEE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN RESIGNS IN PROTEST

A 200-word report by 'Abd-al-Hayy Muhammad on pages 1 and 8 describes the resignation of the deputy chairman of al-Azhar's fatwa committee, Shaykh Mahmud 'Abd-al-Mutajalli, in protest against the fact that "al-Azhar Shaykh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi has referred all cases relating to incoming fatwas to the mufti's office," which impinges on the role of 'Abd-al-Mutajalli's committee. Sources confirm that the al-Azhar shaykh has referred 400 fatwa cases that were

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formerly handled by the fatwa committee to the mufti's office. In addition, the al-Azhar's Call and Counselling Department is facing great restrictions on its activities. It seems that the plan is to reduce the size of this department and place it under the wing of the Awqaf Ministry, the report says.

U.S. OFFICIALS 'STEAL IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS' FROM KILLED AGENT

A 300-word report on pages 1 and 8 deals with the killing of a "Central Intelligence Agency agent by a young Egyptian, 'Umar Muhammad Nu'man." The agent's job allegedly was to "gather accurate information on the mineral resources in Egypt and to take pictures of where they are located." The report says: "Some U.S. Embassy officials quickly went to the Semiramis Hotel, even before the Ministry of Interior informed them of the incident, and went up to her room, Room 522. They stole important papers she had in the room, which caused trouble between them and the Egyptian police. This also shows how important the victim was to U.S. intelligence."

ISRAEL, U.S. WAGE SEXUAL WAR ON ARABS BY STARTING 'ARAB HOTLINE'

Muhammad Hilal's 300-word report on page 1 describes a "crucial document" AL-SHA'B has acquired that confirms the beginning of a new kind of warfare the "American satan" is waging to destroy Egyptian society. This consists of sending faxes to listed companies giving telephone numbers. When these numbers are dialed, one hears sex stories. The faxes, in Arabic and English,reportedly say: "The Arab hotline. Life is a telephone call away for starting friendships. Call us now on the number.... Arousing sexual stories over the phone." The report claims that these "satanic efforts" were begun by the Zionist enemy, Israel, against Egypt and the Arab region, in order to "legalize homosexuality in Egypt and the Islamic countries, spread sexual chaos, and break down the Arab societies so that they will become easier to manipulate, thus realizing the dream of a Greater Israel." This dirty Israeli war comes after a series of others in the Arab region, the most recent of which was "Israel's sexual chewing gum."

ERBAKAN PROMISES TO DISSIPATE FEARS OF ARABS

Page 1 features a 200-word dispatch from Istanbul by Ahmad al- Suyufi sends on an interview with new Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan in which he discusses relations with the Arab countries. Erbakan says: "We will work on dissipating fears on both the external and internal levels and provide an example to be emulated. We will also confirm that Muslims are competent men of state, not terrorists or enemies of anyone. We will maintain good relations with the West and Europe alongside rapprochement with the Islamic world, in a balanced manner that serves the interests of Turkey and the Islamic World." He promises to resolve his government's problems, particularly the economic ones.

A more detailed 3,000-word dispatch from Istanbul by the same correspondent, published on page 3, analyzes recent developments in Turkey since former Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's formed a coalition with the Islamic Refah Party.

ARAB HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION REPORTS ON CONDITIONS IN EGYPT

On page 4 is published a 1,000-word account by Dawud Hasan citing at length the Arab Human Rights Organization's report on deteriorating human rights conditions in the Arab world due to the marginalization of democracy and the increase in violence between governments and their opposition. The report notes that foreign intervention to improve human rights has led to the slow death of millions of Arabs, such as in the imposition of a embargo on Iraq. The report concentrates on conditions in Egypt, which have steadily been deteriorating as a result of armed conflict between the government and the violent groups. In addition, human rights violations have also increased, scores of citizens are indiscriminately arrested after any act of violence, and many disappear without a trace. In addition, "prisoners and detainees continue to suffer from various forms of maltreatment, such as torture, absence of health care, malnutrition, and deprivation of visits and contacts with their families and lawyers." Moreover, the government has stepped up censorship of the domestic and foreign printed media. The report notes that the People's Assembly election results were falsified and that the National Democratic Party monopolizes political action in the country.

SEMINAR DISCUSSES ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS' MERGING IN POLITICAL LIFE

A 500-word unattributed report on page 4 takes up the issue of human rights violations in Egypt. It details points discussed at a seminar on Saturday, 20 July, on the strategies of merging the moderate Islamic movements in Arab political life, focussing on cultural problems. Ahmad Sayf-al-Islam al-Banna, secretary general of the Lawyers' Association, said in his speech: "The Muslim Brothers' call is in essence a flexible one, not a rigid one." "The Brothers' ideology has always rested on a democratic system of government," he says, "and al-Banna's writings accept the Constitution, the

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parliamentary system, and adherence to the will of the people." On freedom of expression and opinion, he said: "The principles of Islam, which are the principles of the Brothers, respect these rights and do not infringe on them. The rights of minorities are respected and protected." Yahya al-Jamal, a Muslim brother, said: "The Islamic current should not portray itself as a political party. It could present itself as an intellectual current that takes into consideration modern citizenship rights." 'Abd-al- Ghaffar Shakar, secretary of education in the National Progressive Unionist Grouping, said he supports merging Islamic movements in Arab political life. Others also spoke at the seminar, presenting their views on the political participation of religious groups in government.

MUSTAFA MASHHUR ON MUSLIM BROTHERS' MILITARY TRIAL, ZIONIST ENEMY

Mustafa Mashhur writes in his 1,700-word column on page 5 on the Muslim Brothers and the military trials of some members, as well as the Brothers' views of the Zionist enemy. He opens his column by saying he would like to eliminate doubts and refute the unjust accusations leveled against the Muslim Brothers by clarifying the truths behind them. He reviews the conditions of Muslims and Islam since the beginning of the 20th Century, when they were under foreign occupation and rule, and notes that Imam Hasan al-Banna then decided to establish the Muslim Brotherhood in order to rescue the Muslims. Mashhur reviews the steps al-Banna took and quotes many of his writings and speeches. As a result, "many Muslims woke up and sensed the danger from their enemies," Mashhur says, which bothered the enemies of Wld-islamists 1.

He reviews the Brotherhood's activities in Palestine against the Zionists in 1948. The Muslim Brothers warned the Arabs and Muslims of the dangers from the Zionist enemy, but the latter did not listen, he says. Mashhur continues: "The defendants in these coming military trials, which are void of any incriminating evidence, would all be found innocent if they were tried by their natural judge. But what is required is to convict them. That is why they are being tried by the military courts, so that the military will sentence them." He maintains that the Muslim Brothers have been cleared of any crime of violence, "and there has been no proof that a single member has taken part in any act of violence, or participated in any attempt to get to power through the use of force. It has also been proven that the Brothers stick to the law and Constitution," and believe in God's call. But the government agencies and their propagandists persist in attacking the Brothers. "Perhaps the intention is to harass the brothers and try to prevent them from working for God, which will not happen," Mashhur says. He tells those Brothers currently under trial not to despair but to have faith in God.

Mashhur then proceeds to warn Muslims against the Zionist enemy. He notes that Netanyahu's visit to Cairo and his statements there, in which he affirmed his adherence to his rigid stances on settlement, expansion, repatriation for Palestinians, Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights, is no different from his stance in Tel Aviv and Washington. He writes: "This enemy which set up its current entity through terrorism, violence, murder, and expulsion, is now asking for cooperation to fight terrorism. By terrorism, it means the stone-throwing children's intifadah and the martyrdom operations, which are actually a legitimate response to the usurping occupier." He says this is the Zionist policy, whose objective is "to establish their national homeland from the Nile to Yathrib [old name for Medina in Saudi Arabia], and on to the Euphrates on the bodies of Arabs and Muslims." He wonders whether the Arabs will pay attention to the enemy's policies and objectives, whether under Peres or Netanyahu.

LABOR PARTY LEADER SAYS ISRAELIS DIVIDED ARABS THROUGH PEACE

A 3,000-word report on page 6 by 'Amr Salman focuses on the Labor Party's popular congress in al-Ma'sarah. Labor Party leader Ibrahim Shukri delivered a speech in which he discussed various matters, including political affairs in Egypt and peace moves in the region. He said: "The Israelis schemed to fragment the nation and split up its unity. They understood that if war united the Arabs, then peace must divide them. They proceeded to do this by isolating Egypt through the Camp David agreements, and the rest of the conspiracy to fragment and tear the nation apart continued." He noted that the Labor Party will carry banners supporting the summit to all parts of Egypt. On the embargoes imposed on Iraq, Libya, and Sudan, he maintains it is no more than "a link in the Zionist-U.S. scheme to strike at the unity of the Arab nation and fragment it." Shukri also touched on the importance of internal unity. Other people spoke at the congress and expressed similar views.

LABOR PARTY SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS DEMAND BOYCOTT OF ISRAELI GOODS

A 50-word report on page 8 by Mu'tazz al-Hadidi says that participants in the Labor Party popular organizations' seminar demanded that Zionist products be boycotted and the Zionist enemy's provocations confronted.

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The report cites statements by a priest and a shaykh on this matter.

WRITER ADVOCATES DIALOGUE WITH ISLAMIC CURRENT IN ARAB WORLD

A 2,000-word article by 'Abd-al-Sattar al-Tawilah appears on page 4, entitled: "Al-Bashir's Mediation With the Political Islamic Current." The article is taken from the 9 July edition of AL-WAFD, where it was first published. Al-Tawilah advocates dialogue among all Arab groups, whether governments or popular currents. He believes "dialogue with the Islamic political current should begin at the pan-Arab level, whether this current is represented in countries such as Sudan and Iran or in specific organizations."

The article is written in the form of a dialogue between al- Tawilah and some of his friends in the National Democratic Party [NDP], where they ask the questions and he responds. Asked if he advocates dialogue with the Islamic currents regarding the pan-Arab cause, he says Arab rulers have recently given "the Islamic political current a great opportunity to take a leading position in confronting and defending the Arab national cause." He confirms that he completely opposes the Islamic political current, but that national causes should put aside all differences to avert friction. He describes Israel's Netanyahu, Levi, and Sharon as "Hitler's racist, fanatic, extremist, and stupid students because they believe in the superiority of the Jews," just like the Aryans believed in their own superiority. He believes the Arabs should unite and stand in one rank against the enemy. He notes that before any cooperation with the Islamic current takes place, the latter should declare publicly that it renounces the use of violence, extremism, and terrorism, and that it will in fact take part in combating them in Egypt. On whether cooperation with that current would give it greater political power which, in turn, would endanger the democratic forces in the country, he asks: "Why do we believe that this current is the one that will excel in its struggle against Zionism and imperialism? Once again, it is our inferiority complex and feeling of incompetence." Regarding what would happen if this current refuses to participate in the war against the extremists and terrorists, he says the government should then announce this to the masses and reveal that this current approves of sabotage, murder, and killing, which serve the purposes of Zionism above all. The NDP "must reveal its innocence and confirm that it is seeking to gather all forces against the primary enemy of the nation. The responsibility then falls on those who reject it."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Husayni—'Abd-al-Qadir's Office Unrelated to PA

TA0208080596 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Telephone interview with PA member Faysal al-Husayni by 'Ayana Eylon and 'Ido Baum; place not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Eylon] A Palestinian Authority [PA] office has been opened in Jerusalem in flagrant violation of the Oslo accords, and Israel has reacted by issuing an ultimatum. What will you do?

[Al-Husayni] I do not think it is a PA office. This office belongs to a man who was elected to represent the residents of Jerusalem. He needs a place where people can come and see him. He lives in Jerusalem, and people should not have to travel out of the city to meet their elected representative.

[Baum] You are being deliberately obtuse. Is this not an attempt to establish facts in Jerusalem?

[Al-Husayni] No, no, it is nothing like that. It is not a government office, it is an office belonging to a man who was elected by Jerusalem residents. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Nabulus Commercial Strike Following Death of Prisoner

TA0108121696 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A commercial strike has been declared today in Nabulus following the death of a Palestinian prisoner as a result of torture suffered in a Palestinian detention facility. The Fatah movement has issued a leaflet criticizing the torture of prisoners and calling on 'Arafat to appoint a commission of inquiry into the incident. Our correspondent Hanan Schlein reports:

[Begin Schlein recording] The heads of the national institutions in Nabulus yesterday held an emergency meeting following the torture of Mahmud Jumayyil in the Junayd Prison. For the first time since the entrance of the Palestinian Authority [PA] to the city they decided to declare a commercial strike to protest the phenomenon of torture in prisons. Jumayyil's family members said that during the interrogation the interrogators broke his skull and burned parts of his body.

When his death was announced, dozens of youths went on a protest march in the city casbah and Fatah activists distributed a leaflet demanding that 'Arafat

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personally deal with the problem and put an end to this phenomenon. The PA chairman knows very well that unless he acts quickly, the reaction of the Palestinian street in Nabulus and other West Bank and Gaza Strip cities will be severe. [passage omitted]

Jumayyil's father spoke with Yasir 'Arafat yesterday. The latter immediately ordered the detention of the three security men who tortured Jumayyil. People in Nabulus warn that if 'Arafat fails to act immediately as a real president who cares about his people, they will not hesitate to take to the street. Meanwhile Palestinian officers in Nabulus are trying to preserve the calm and hope that the appointment of the commission of inquiry will calm down the local residents. [end recording]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1000 GMT on 1 August adds: "Nabulus has been declared a closed military zone to Israelis, and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] units in the area have been put on alert. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that city officials fear that disturbances will erupt during the funeral of Fatah activist Mahmud Jumayyil, who was tortured to death by Palestinian security men. Earlier today some 2,000 persons held a protest demonstration in Nabulus opposite the headquarters of the Palestinian Police."]

Palestinian Affairs: Legislative Council Issues Statement on al-Jumayyil Death

JN0108181396 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Report by Sa'id 'Ayyad in Bethlehem]

[FBIS Translated Text] At the end of the 15th meeting of its first session, which lasted for three days, the Legislative Council adopted a set of resolutions dealing with the issue of settlements and Israeli violations. The council noted that Israel's extensive settlement activity, its procrastination in implementing what was signed by the Israeli side, and its evasion of the peace requirements pose a serious threat to the entire peace process and void the agreements signed between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. These agreements stipulate that no changes should be made on the ground that will affect the final-status negotiations.

The Legislative Council decided to ask the executive branch to examine the possibility of suspending negotiations until Israel respects the agreements signed with the Palestinian side, stops the violations, and halts settlement activity. The council also decided to ask the executive branch to examine the possibility of calling for a UN Security Council meeting to discuss Israeli violations, intensify work on the Arab, Islamic, and international levels to explain these violations and work with the Arab countries concerned to freeze the process of normalization with the Israeli side. The council also decided to ask the executive branch to form a higher national committee to rescue Jerusalem — a committee that will be charged with preparing for a national conference to which Palestinian economic figures will be invited. The task of these economic figures will be to draw up and implement a plan to develop Arab Jerusalem and provide all the material capabilities to reinforce the steadfastness of our people in Jerusalem and its surroundings and also to form a land authority in which the relevent ministries are represented.

The martyrdom of Mahmud al-Jumayyil was discussed during the council's morning session. The council held a special session to discuss this issue, and decided to form a seven-member fact-finding committee stemming from the Legislative Council to follow up this issue. The council decided to support and follow up the implementation of the executive branch's decision to bring those responsible to trial and ensure they receive the severest punishment. The council also decided to delegate a team to go to Nabulus to take part in the martyr's funeral and to calm things down.

The Legislative Council issued a statement denouncing and expressing anger and outrage over this crime. The council urged our Palestinian people everywhere to remain fully calm and alert and not to allow anyone to spread chaos among our peoples' ranks and sow the seeds of internal sedition, which everyone fully realizes will have a disastrous effect on our people's cause, aspirations, and accomplishments.

In its statement, the council says that what happened to al-Jumayyil should not be repeated and that this can only be done by bring those responsible for this crime to account and placing stringent controls over the work of security bodies and all the National Authority's institutions so that they come under the supremacy of the law. In this regard, the statement says: The council supports the measures taken by the executive branch to bring the culprits to account.

Palestinian Affairs: Attorney General on Arrest of Jumayyil's Interrogators

JN0108182696 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1120 GMT 1 Aug 96

[From the "Today's Events"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Attorney General Khalid al-Qidrah asserted that those involved in the martyrdom of Mahmud al-Jumayyil in Nabulus were arrested and will be referred to trial after interrogation is completed. Regarding the circumstances that led to the death

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of al-Jumayyil and interrogation procedures, Attorney General Khalid al-Qidrah speaks to colleague Ibrahim al-Hinn.

[Begin recording] [al-Qidrah] First of all, I would like to emphasize something his excellency the president has emphasized. Not for one moment would we neglect or show leniency to any person who harms our people, be they ordinary citizens who are detained or not. Every defendant has rights during interrogation. We have a constitution. I would like the people who are hearing a lot about a draft constitution law that is being prepared — and this is something which we do not object to — to know that we are not living in a constitutional vacuum. Our constitution is one of the most modern constitutions and stipulates and guarantees public liberties.

[Al-Hinn] Were the defendants arrested?

[Al-Qidrah] Yes, as soon as we were informed of the incident and as soon as we received his excellency the president's instructions, we began investigations immediately. An autopsy is being carried out on al-Jumayyil's body to identify the cause of death. Those who are suspected of involvement in this action, which we reject, are being interrogated. As I said, we do not hesitate to punish any one who commits any crime whatsoever regardless of this person's official or social position. [passage omitted]

[Al-Hinn] As you know Mr. Attorney General, this incident was used against the Palestinian Authority and its accomplishments, although this authority is still taking its first steps. Have instructions been issued to all security organs to be more careful in such cases?

[Al-Qidrah] I would not exaggerate if I say that his excellency the president, the Public Prosecutor's office, and even the heads of the various security organs constantly issue instructions in this respect. Those working in the interrogation field are under strict supervision. However, it seems that this person in particular, along with another person, who had escaped from prison, had been chased. There were certain circumstance and conditions that confused the interrogators.

[Al-Hinn] But sir....

[Al-Qidrah interrupting] However, there are strict instructions and we continue to issue instructions on the need to treat defendants in an appropriate manner during interrogation in accordance with the law. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Jumayyil Buried in Nabulus; PA Official Comments

JN0208064496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The People of Nabulus buried the body of Martyr Mahmud al-Jumayyil yesterday. The martyr's father asked the people who attended the funeral to uphold national unity and stand as one against all attempts to undermine our national achievements. He warned against attempts by the country's enemies to sow seeds of sedition.

The martyr's father emphasized that Jerusalem is the capital of the Palestinian state headed by President Yasir 'Arafat. He said that the Palestinian people and the Palestinian National Authority [PA] disavow the perpetrators and their deeds.

Presidency Secretary al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim praised the Palestinian Legislative Council statement on the martyrdom of Mahmud al-Jumayyil of Nabulus. 'Abd-al-Rahim stressed that the PA will severely punish those responsible for the crime.

In a statement yesterday, 'Abd-al-Rahim asked our people to be calm and not to be driven by insidious attempts to create sedition and blow the issue out of proportion.

'Abd-al-Rahim said that the PA regards al-Jumayyil as one of the Palestinian revolution martyrs, noting that certain individuals committed certain excesses, adding that these individuals will be referred to military courts.

Palestinian Affairs: Fatah To Meet in 'Next Few Days' To Discuss New 'Strategy'

MM0108114296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Aug 96 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Sakhr Habash Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Fatah To Discuss New Strategy To Confront Netanyahu's Hard-Line Policy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — The Fatah Central Committee will hold a meeting outside Palestine within the next few days in either Tunis or Cairo in order to draw up a new strategy for the movement's work in the light of the changes the region has been experiencing since Binyamin Netanyahu's assumption of power in Israel. Fatah Central Committee member Sakhr Habash, official in charge of ideological mobilization, has told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Fatah Central Committee meeting will deal with reorganizing the "Fatah House" in the light of domestic and regional developments, pointing out that Fatah has held conferences in some Palestinian cities

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on the reorganization of Fatah and that these meetings will continue in all Palestinian cities. Major General Muhammad Jihad, a Fatah Central Committee member abroad residing in Jordan, had traveled to Tunis at an invitation from the Fatah Central Committee secretary to hold a meeting of all Fatah Central Committee members, but Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi preferred to postpone the committee's meetings because of their engagements, with the intention of holding the meetings in the Egyptian capital soon.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Arrives in Jericho; Cabinet To Meet

JN0208095596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Report by Ibrahim Milhim]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Jericho from Bethlehem this morning. He was received by a number of ministers and deputies, security officials, heads of national organizations, and tribal representatives.

Upon arrival, 'Arafat held an open meeting with citizens in the city. He heard their problems and promised to solve many of them. In an address to the citizens, 'Arafat emphasized the Palestinian National Authority's commitment to the peace process and warned that any delay in this process will reflect negatively on the peace march in the region. He asked the Israeli Government to adhere to the peace agreements.

The Council of Ministers is expected to hold its weekly session in the city this evening.

'Arafat will perform the Friday prayers at the Old Mosque in Jericho.

Palestinian Affairs: Abu-Zayyad Warns Against Israeli 'Violations' in Jerusalem

TA0108151996 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 31 Jul 96 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] Bethlehem, QUDS PRESS — A Palestinian Legislative Council [LC] deputy has warned that the new Israeli Government's persistence in its assaults on occupied Jerusalem and its continuation of settlement activity calls into question the credibility of the political process for establishing a just peace on the basis of international legitimacy's resolutions.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS, deputy Ziyad Abu-Zayyad said that Israel's implementation of its settlement policy seeks to fragment the West Bank and isolate Jerusalem. He added that all these steps by Israel confirm that it does not intend to proceed forward to achieve a fair settlement, but is continuing with the policy of annexing confiscated land and destroying any chance or possibility of reaching a just solution.

The Palestinian deputy expressed the belief that due to the Israeli aggression and violations, there is no benefit in continuing the political peace process despite the fact that the PLO signed the Declaration of Principles with the Israeli Government. Moreover, Abu-Zayyad emphasized that it is impossible to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict without reaching a just solution to the issue of Jerusalem that would ensure the Palestinian people's rights in the city. Those are sovereign and religious rights.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Interviewed on Alleged Labor-PA Settlement Deal

TA0108140396 (Internet) IMRA News Service in English 31 Jul 96

[Interview with Sa'ib 'Urayqat, PA Minister of Local Government, by Dr. Aaron Lerner on 31 July; place not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] IMRA: In the last 24 hours there has been much talk on the Israeli side about an agreement which had been reached with the PA [Palestinian Authority] before Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin was assassinated. The agreement provided for most settlers to remain in their homes and for an amorphous sovereignty situation within the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem in which while Israel would relinquish sovereignty the PA would not have it there either. But with all this talk from the Israeli side we haven't heard much of a Palestinian response to the story. Can you give us some insight?

'Urayqat: Honestly, I am personally not aware of these issues. All I am aware of is that there was one meeting in Taba for the permanent negotiations which set the issues which will be discussed and a joint statement was issued which listed them, including the settlements, Jerusalem and refugees.

IMRA: Is it possible that the PA would accept the kind of deal which Ya'ir Hirschfeld describes?

'Urayqat: Personally speaking, the last thing we want to do is put the future generations in a situation similar to Bosnia or Ireland. We have examples all around of us of mixing — even Lebanon. We have to act with sanity. We need a two state solution. I think that, realistically speaking, you cannot have two systems in one land: Jericho in one system and Vered Yeriho in another system.

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IMRA: What about this talk about the 'Etzyon Bloc settlements remaining in place?

'Urayqat: As I told you before, there was only one meeting.

IMRA: Is it possible that this deal was cut without your knowledge?

'Urayqat: Personally speaking, I am a chief negotiator and there have been so many meetings and brain storming sessions and proposals among the academics, but what really matters is the official negotiations. That has always been what matters in the end. And, as I said, we have only had one such session.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' on Settlement of Dispute With 'Arafat

MM0208104596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Aug 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Mahmud Abu-'Id: "Quray' Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Disagreement With 'Arafat Has Been Settled, Our Demand Is Independence of Legislative Council"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Occupied Jerusalem — Palestinian Legislative Council [PC] Speaker Ahmad Quray' has confirmed that the disagreement between him and Palestinian Authority [PA] President Yasir 'Arafat "has been settled," and that he has withdrawn his resignation, which he submitted following a verbal clash with 'Arafat on Tuesday [30 July].

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Quray' said that he did not want to go into the details of the issue. However, he spoke about the essence of the disagreement, which PC sources described as a fundamental disagreement concerning a discussion of the Basic Law (constitution), the terms of reference for the elected PC, and the PC's relationship with PA President Yasir 'Arafat.

In this context Quray' said that "the basic law being discussed at the PC is aimed at regulating Palestinian political life and affirming the democratic system of government in Palestine and the separation of powers principle." He added: "Our aim is to give each of the three authorities — executive, legislative, and judicial — their full independence. But at the same time we want these authorities to cooperate with one another."

Quray' pointed out that he explained his view to PC members and President 'Arafat, saying that "the basic law's task is to lay the foundations of freedom and the rule of the law." He added: "For its part the national charter, which the PLO Legal Committee is busy preparing in a new shape, is aimed at defining the Palestinian people's general policy and strategy."

Asked about the disagreement, especially as President 'Arafat protested at the PLO Executive Committee's failure to submit the basic law to the PC for discussion, the PC speaker said: "I would like to make it clear that I have good relations with Palestine National Council Speaker Abu-al-Dib [Salim al-Za'nun]. We understand the role of each council in the Palestinian people's political life, and there is no contradiction between us." He said, "we should give the council its real role."

Informed sources have told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the disagreement between 'Arafat and Quray' was settled following the mediation of a group of influential Palestinian figures, first and foremost Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu-Mazin), who has good relations with Quray' and al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim. The disagreement was resolved after a two-hour meeting between 'Arafat and Quray's through Abu-Mazin's mediation.

The PC speaker has confirmed that the council's committees have begun to effectively perform their duties and receive citizens' complaints. He said that "Israel is trying to obstruct the Council's work all the time." He added that "this council is elected directly by the Palestinian people."

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: Netanyahu, King Husayn Met in London 26 Jul

TA0208050796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu traveled secretly to London last weekend. Israeli sources say that, among other things, the prime minister met with Jordan's King Husayn at his London home. They say the prime minister left last Friday [26 July] and returned on Saturday night. He was accompanied by Mosad head Dani Yatom, his Military Secretary Ze'ev Livne, political adviser Dore Gold, and Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave.

King Husayn is now due to visit Damascus for a meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on Sunday. He will meet again with Netanyahu in Amman on Monday.

The prime minister reportedly discussed the so-called Lebanon First plan with Husayn. Under the plan, Israel will withdraw from the south Lebanon security zone as a first stage in peace agreements with Lebanon and Syria.

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Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Urayqat, Bentzur Discuss Implementation of Oslo B Accord

TA0108163396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1430 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Eytan Bentzur, the Israeli Foreign Ministry acting director general, met two days ago in Jerusalem with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, official in charge of local government in the Palestinian Authority [PA]. Our political affairs correspondent Sa'id Mu'addi reports that during the meeting they discussed a number of issues relating to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the makeup of the steering and supervision committee that will be tasked with implementing the Oslo B agreement. At the meeting, Dr. 'Urayqat stressed the need of implementing the signed agreements between the two sides.

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Algeria

Algeria: Ministry Reports Assassination of French Bishop in Oran

LD0208082696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued by the security services says that a bomb exploded at the residence of the bishop of Oran last night. The statement added that the operation killed Bishop Pierre Claverie, aged 85 years, and his chauffeur.

On behalf of the Algerian Government, Mostefa Benmansour, minister of the interior, local authorities, and the environment condemned this criminal act, which targeted a place of worship and killed an esteemed church figure.

The ministry's statement also extended the Algerian Government's condolences, affirming its determination to arrest and punish with the full force of law the perpetrators of the hideous crime, which contradicts the values of humanity, hospitality, and concord which characterize the Algerian people and true Islam.

For his part, a French Foreign Ministry spokesman expressed his country's condemnation of this act.

Algeria: Interior Minister, FIS Condemn Murder of French Bishop

LD0208083496 Paris Radio France International in French 0730 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In Algeria, a French Catholic man of the cloth, Bishop of Oran Pierre Claverie, died last night, a few hours after the end of his visit with the French foreign minister [Herve de Charette]. Laurent Chaffard reports:

[Chaffard] [passage omitted] The Algerian interior minister has said this was a criminal and barbaric act. The Islamists of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] have condemned this act and described it as sadistic. Monsignor Duval, chairman of the French bishops' conference, has said he was horrified. [passage omitted]

Nobody has claimed responsibility for the killing yet, but it does look like retaliation from fundamentalists for the visit of Herve de Charette, who during his stay in Algiers advocated the revival of French diplomacy in Algeria.

Algeria: French Foreign Minister de Charette Interviewed on Talks

LD0108123196 Paris France-2 Television Network in French 1100 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Interview with French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette in Algiers by Agnes Molinier in the studio — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Molinier] Can we say that your visit is a way for France to recognize the democratic value of the Algerian regime?

[De Charette] It is first and foremost because we believe that relations between France and Algeria — political, economic, and cultural relations — are relations that are important for our two countries, for France in particular. I have come here in order to give these relations a warmer and friendlier flavor, and I think we are succeeding.

[Molinier] Acts of violence have continued in Algeria since Liamine Zeroual's election in October. What is your stance on this issue?

[De Charette] I am going to tell you. I have a very straightforward stance. These are very difficult and very trying problems for the Algerian people. They are a matter for the responsibility and authority of the Algerian nation and its leaders, including its president, who was elected in November last year, as you know. France does not intend to meddle in Algerian affairs.

[Molinier] You have met the religious community of Algiers. What did you say to one another?

[De Charette] I have indeed met the bishop of Oran, the bishop of Constantine, and the vicar general of Algiers. We had talks, and, as you can imagine, we spoke about the monks of Tibherine, about that horrible tragedy. We also discussed security measures. I think this meeting was very useful and very friendly.

[Molinier] Minister, Jacques Chirac and Liamine Zeroual were supposed to meet before the latter's election. Is a new meeting on the agenda?

[De Charette] No, no, this is not topical right now. I have given President Zeroual a friendly message from President Chirac. I have had very thorough talks with the Algerian president, prime minister, and foreign minister, and we have decided to organize a substantial and serious dialogue in all fields to do with relations between France and Algeria, which we intend to develop and make efficient and friendly.

[Molinier] Thank you very much, Herve de Charette, for speaking to us.

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Algeria: French Minister Comments on Meeting With Zeroual

LD0108135096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The visit of French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette is in its second day today, giving a new impetus to cooperation between the two countries.

French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette was received by President Liamine Zeroual. On leaving the presidency, De Charette said the following:

[Begin De Charette recording; in French fading into Arabic translation] I have delivered a message to President Zeroual from French President Jacques Chirac. We also also tackled bilateral Algerian-French relations. I have expressed to President Zeroual France's political wish to give bilateral relations a new impetus based on principles and mutual respect within the framework of French-Algerian common interest. Joint coordination on all the issues of interest for both countries to give their bilateral relations further impetus — this will be the basis of our action. [end recording]

The prime minister [Ahmed Ouyahia] today received France's foreign minister. Foreign Minister Ahmed Attaf attended the meeting. [passage omitted]

Algeria: French Minister Sees Contacts as Constructive, Positive

LD0108211796 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1800 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The major topic in this newscast is Franco-Algerian relations owing to the official visit by the French foreign affairs minister to Algiers. In the course of this eminently political visit, Herve de Charette has been received by President Liamine Zeroual and the head of the government, Ahmed Ouyahia. He also had two meetings, last night and this morning, with his counterpart, Ahmed Attaf.

The French minister described his meetings with the Algerian officials as positive. These were his comments:

[Begin de Charette recording] The meetings which I have had since yesterday have been constructive and positive and they have been marked by the utmost frankness and by the greatest cordiality.

We have spoken at great length about bilateral relations. We have also spoken about international issues ranging from the peace process — the meetings allowed me to express the impressions which I gathered and the conclusions which I drew from the trip that I made several days ago to the Middle East — to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. Of course I also briefed my interlocutors on the conference on terrorism which was held only yesterday in Paris comprising the foreign affairs and security ministers of the G-8 [figure as heard]. [end recording]

In the course of an early afternoon news conference he gave at the El Mithak, the French foreign minister spoke at great length of France's political willingness to turn over a new leaf in Franco-Algerian relations. Several issues were mentioned during the news conference such as the tricky subject of visas, as well as the issue of Air Algerie.

De Charette expressed the wish for France to improve as much as possible the conditions for issuing visas. The two countries, he said, had agreed that meetings would be organized between the officials of these sectors including, in this case at the level of Algerian and French interior ministers, to look at and examine the issues in a detailed, practical, and concrete manner.

In respect of the Air Algerie issue, de Charette stated that the two parties had decided to tackle it as soon as possible at a meeting of specialists of the two countries to try to resolve the issue. We agreed that this issue which cannot be looked at from an emotional angle but from a practical one must be settled as soon as possible.

The main aim of de Charette's visit to Algiers was to turn over a new leaf in Franco-Algerian relations and to achieve this, the dialogue that the two countries intend to develop should principally be based on three main themes: Politics, economics, and human relations.

[Begin de Charette recording] First of all there is the political dimension. We have thus agreed that the secretaries general of our foreign affairs ministries will convene regularly for meetings which will deal both with bilateral relations and the major issues of international life at the regional and world levels.

We think that in reality we share the same ideas on most subjects and we can thus strengthen our common efforts.

The second dimension is the economic dimension. Several agreements should come into effect in the near future. First of all a new fiscal agreement, which should soon be signed by the finance ministers. In addition there will be a new agreement on protection of and incentives for investment which will be ratified by France this autumn and which will thus be ready to come into effect between then and the end of the year. Evidently this is very important because it will encourage French companies to invest in Algeria with its Algerian partners.

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Finally the finance ministers will meet as soon as possible to discuss the different aspects of financial cooperation for the years to come.

Finally the third dimension is the human aspect. It is not simply a question of relations between the two governments. It is not simply a question of relations between our companies even if they are very important. It is also about the relations between our two peoples and about cultural, scientific, and technical cooperation which we have agreed to extend. The 10-year bilateral agreement which links us and which expires this year will be the subject of renewal.

This also concerns the movement of people and I felt how sensitive an issue this is from an Algerian point of view. Naturally I pointed out what our own constraints are. Of course we pay attention to Algerian concerns. I ask in exchange that they are also mindful of French concerns. Our aim is both to ensure the control of migrant flow, which is a matter of an overall policy decided by France and which I think is necessary for our country, and we also wish to improve as much as possible the conditions for issuing visas which I know have caused difficulties and of course it is important for us to look after the security of state officials.

We agreed that meetings will be organized between the officials of these sectors including, in this case at the level of the Algerian and French interior ministers, looking at and examining these issues in a detailed, practical, and concrete manner. [end recording]

It should also be recalled that this morning the French foreign minister delivered a message from President Chirac to President Liamine Zeroual. [passage omitted]

Algeria: President Invites Opposition, Union Leaders for Talks

LD0108212696 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The bilateral meetings which are aimed at bolstering the national dialogue, will be resumed tomorrow. These meeting are going to be held in the wake of the multilateral meetings [with opposition parties] held recently at the presidency's initiative.

In this respect, the president of the republic has invited the leaders of the following political parties: The Rally for Culture and Democracy, the Socialist Forces Front, Ennahada Movement, the National Liberaion Front, the Islamic Society Movement - HAMAS, and the secretary general of the General Union of Algerian Workers.

Egypt

Egypt: Mubarak on U.S. Stand, Peace, Terrorism

NC0108202096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1815 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 1 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has stressed that there is a "great understanding" between the Egyptian and United States on all issues and that he felt this clearly in his talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton, Administration officials, and congressional leaders.

In a dialogue he had today with the Egyptian newspaper editors and the press delegation covering his visit to Washington, President Mubarak also stressed that the U.S. stand on the Middle East peace issue is firm and has not changed. He said that U.S. officials recognize the land for peace principle, noting that he stated this openly in the joint news conference he held with the U.S. President following their talks at the White House.

He said that all his visits to the United States have had positive results.

The editors noted that this visit was greatly praised in the U.S. media and that the U.S. press underlined President Mubarak's leadership.

The president said that Egyptian contacts are continuing with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to activate the peace process, stressing in this respect Egypt's historic role in establishing peace in the region. He said: None of these steps on the road to peace would have been achieved had it not been for President al-Sadat and his initiative. It was Egypt that opened the door to peace and endured estrangement from the Arabs for 10 years as a result.

In reply to a question on recent statements by Ari'el Sharon, infrastructure minister in the Israeli cabinet, on expanding the settlements and building bridges in the Golan, President Mubarak said that Egypt's ambassador in Israel Muhammad Basyuni will meet officials there to clarify this position. He noted that the U.S. ambassador in Israeli had also met the Israeli prime minister seeking clarification of their position on Sharon's recent statements.

President Mubarak reiterated the importance of Egyptian-U.S. relations and noted that there are no differences between the two countries, as some media have tried to depict. He stressed that Egypt is keen on its relations with the United States. He said that he spoke to President Clinton about the importance of peace and the resumption of negotiations and stressed that peace will spare the region the danger of terrorism,

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which has started to take more destructive forms of violence.

He added: I warned Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu during my recent talks with him in Cairo of the dangers of an escalation in terrorist operations if the peace process stops. He noted that the intifadah has become an outdated form of rejection and there are now new forms those objecting to the occupation could take and this would expand the circle of destruction, ruin, and terrorism.

President Mubarak also noted that he also told Netanyahu that if he, Netanyahu, can achieve security inside Israel, what will he then do to secure his embassies abroad and the Israelis outside Israel's borders?

On the call he made at the news conference for forming a committee that will study ways to punish the perpetrators of terrorist operations without harming the people, President Mubarak said that what this committee needs to do is to carry out thorough studies for submission to an international conference on terrorism in order to find a way to confront groups that perpetrate terrorist attacks; this must be done without harming the peoples they belong to. He added: The message was clear—namely, do not punish the people for actions carried out by groups without international consensus.

The president went on to say that he explained to the U.S. side the damages that befall peoples as a result of collective punishment and told them that a solution must be found to punish these groups without harming the peoples' interests and future.

President Mubarak warned of the dangers that could result if there is a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon without regard to the Golan. He said that the region will face unstable conditions in that case, which would have adverse consequences.

He underlined the importance of the Syrian role in achieving stability and peace in the region and added that ignoring this role and not coordinating with them would greatly harm the future of peace and stability in the Middle East.

On the phenomenon of terrorism, President Mubarak told the Egyptian editors and press delegation: Egypt did not know terrorism until 1986; it only appeared after that. We confronted terrorism firmly and warned that it would spread. Countries that in the past used to ask about human rights and linked such rights to the terrorism issue are not asking about these rights now that terrorism has reached their own territories. The United States recently witnessed a number of terrorist incidents and has started to deal with this issue and confront it differently and more decisively. He added: I was eager to give the U.S. side a comprehensive view of the issue of terrorism.

He said that he discussed bilateral relations, the peace process, and terrorism with President Clinton during their long and intensive talks. He praised President Clinton and described him as superb and understanding, adding that he had asked the U.S. Administration to study and approve all that we have asked for.

Regarding the U.S. media criticism of the Egyptian press for criticizing U.S. policy, President Mubarak said that he explained to U.S. officials that the Egyptian press "criticizes me personally" and asked them: Do you want me to violate democracy and remove articles from the newspapers which criticize the United States or other countries? He added that there are U.S. and Israeli newspapers that attack him and said: Can anyone in these countries stop these attacks on me?

On the Libyan-Western crisis, President Mubarak said he confirmed to the United States and numerous European countries that there is a clear change in Libya and that Libya does not now harbor terrorists.

On the U.S. policy toward Iran and whether the United States is determined to punish it, President Mubarak clarified that the United States disagrees on this matter with the European Union and that economic interests intervene in such matters.

During the dialogue President Mubarak pointed out the importance of the European role, alongside the American role, to the issues of the Arab region.

On the Egyptian-U.S. partnership and what has been achieved in this field so far, President Mubarak said that U.S. businessmen as well as economists here are very satisfied with the economic steps, particularly the ones the Egyptian Government took recently. The study the two sides are carrying out is now proceeding as well as can be expected. He pointed out that there are many joint projects that will be built during the coming stage.

President Mubarak also noted that during the dinner banquet U.S. Vice President Al Gore urged all U.S. investors to invest in Egypt and he himself had spoken to them one by one. He affirmed that the investment climate in Egypt is now much better than ever before and much better than in other countries in the world.

Regarding the praise the journalists heard for President Mubarak from the members of the U.S. Congress throughout the visit, President Mubarak confirmed the importance of relations between Egypt and the U.S. Congress.

President Husni Mubarak highlighted his personal relations with numerous U.S. Congressmen. He said he

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meets with them every now and then and confirmed the importance of the Congressmen's role in supporting the Arab rights and demands Egypt is presenting to the U.S. Administration.

President Mubarak mentioned that there are many U.S. Congressmen who come to Egypt and that he asks them to visit the new urban centers in Egypt, as well as the touristic areas in Sharm al-Shaykh, Sinai, and al-Ghardaqah to learn about the immense progress that has taken place in these places.

Asked about the resumption of the peace talks on the Arab tracks, President Mubarak said: Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu informed us that the Arab-Israeli talks halted when Prime Minister Shim'on Peres was still heading the Israeli Government. Netanyahu said Israel froze the negotiations by itself and that they need to be the ones to restart them.

President Mubarak clarified that Netanyahu told him during their discussions in Cairo recently that he would respect what was agreed upon with the Palestinian side and that the Israeli forces will redeploy, but that there is a different plan for this, which will be implemented later.

On the coming economic summit in Cairo in November, President Mubarak said: I confirmed to the U.S. side that if no progress is made in the peace process by November when the summit convenes, the effect on the economic summit will be negative and some sides will take part in it only to "attack." He pointed out that some Arab countries have contacted Israel recently and confirmed that if the peace process stops, these countries will go back on their stances.

Egypt: Mubarak on U.S. Visit, Peace, Terrorism

NC0208085396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0630 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Aug, (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak described his visit to the United States as successful. He noted that he is acquainted with many U.S. Congress members, both from the Senate and House of Representatives. He added that his relations with U.S. Administration officials are extremely good and that he meets with them frequently, whether in Cairo or in Washington, and thus the picture is clear with regard to the U.S. Administration.

President Mubarak commented on his visit to the United States in an exclusive interview broadcast this morning on the English-language "Good Morning Egypt" Program, carried on the International Nile Channel. He said he discussed with U.S. officials numerous issues, including terrorism and the peace process, which is regarded vital and important to the entire Middle East.

President Mubarak added in the interview, which was conducted moments before he left [Washington], that the U.S. side—President Bill Clinton and all U.S. Administration officials—asserted to him that they still support the peace process and that no change has been introduced to its principles.

President Mubarak was asked whether President Clinton promised to take any steps or adopt specific measures to maintain momentum in the peace process in the coming months. The president explained that the peace process requires cooperation between the parties concerned and between Israel and the United States. He said Egypt considers the U.S. role in this process important and vital and that it will be extremely difficult to pursue the peace process without Washington's efforts.

President Mubarak added that President Clinton attaches great importance to the peace process and that he discussed with him ways and means for advancing this process. He said he will contact Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu when he returns to Egypt to sound out his view on what has to be done to help implement all the agreements that have been reached.

Asked about the most difficult obstacles to the peace process, President Mubarak said that no difficult obstacles exist in this process and that if the will is there, a solution will be found.

He added that he discussed all the issues with the Israeli prime minister, including withdrawal from Hebron and the Jerusalem issue.

The president noted that withdrawal from Hebron has been delayed because, after assuming the prime ministership, Netanyahu had to examine all issues and review all the accords. President Mubarak said Netanyahu told him that he has his own way of implementing these accords and that therefore Egypt is waiting for the Israeli prime minister to devise his plans. He remarked that withdrawal from Hebron faced numerous problems that have existed since former Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres.

President Mubarak expressed his hope that the Likud government will find a solution to these problems and will begin to pull the Israeli troops out of this important place.

As regards Jerusalem, the president noted that the Israelis are saying that it is their capital, while the Palestinians say it is part of their land. He expressed his belief that when withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza strip takes place and everyone is relieved

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of nervous tension, Jerusalem will pose no problem. There will be an opportunity to find a formula to satisfy both parties and this depends on the Palestinians and the Israelis, he added.

On the other hand, President Mubarak emphasized Egypt's eagerness to hold the economic summit in Cairo as scheduled in November. He pointed out that Egypt is making concerted efforts so that the peace process may continue and specific measures can be adopted to encourage all sides to take up positive stands during the summit.

President Mubarak was asked if his talks with the U.S. President dealt with exerting efforts in coordination between the two countries to convene a new international conference on terrorism and whether the time was right to make such a move. He replied that a conference to combat terrorism was held in Sharm al-Shaykh, but that it was not enough.

The president added that he clarified at a joint news conference with Clinton that a committee, "any committee to be agreed upon," should be formed to discuss the motives of and ways to combat terrorism and to submit proposals [to] an international summit for action. He noted that all world leaders should attend this summit and extend help in this respect, because terrorism is a danger besetting all countries, not one specific country.

President Mubarak pointed out that he delivered numerous speeches since 1986 warning of the dangers of terrorism, but no one heeded them. He said the European countries began to realize the danger of terrorism only when terrorism started to spread in these countries in the early 1990's and that terrorism has now reached the United States.

The president called on all countries to give greater attention to the problem of terrorism and to convene a conference on the problem or set up a committee first to discuss means and suggestions for resolving the problem, and then submit them to the conference.

On the principle of imposing collective sanctions on entire nations and states, President Mubarak clarified that these kinds of sanctions affect the entire peoples of these countries, while the perpetrators of the crime that required sanctions form a small number of individuals. Therefore, he remarked, collective sanctions should not be imposed because they arouse nations' anger.

The president added that when an individual makes a mistake or commits a crime, the international community should discuss ways to punish the perpetrators. He went on: I do not mean leaders or particular groups, but those who committed the crime in particular. This is because collective sanctions are unfair for all.

President Mubarak answered a question on whether he got a response from the U.S. side or the international community to a proposal to form a committee to identify and punish perpetrators of international crimes. He said he announced this proposal at his news conference and that the whole world heard it. He expressed his belief that everyone must realize the importance of fighting terrorism, because its danger is extremely immense and therefore all must unite to find a solution to the problem.

On the U.S. Congress members' view of Egypt's role in the Middle East peace process, President Mubarak said Egypt has regarded the Middle East problem as its own problem from the beginning. He noted that had it not been for Egypt, the peace process would not have achieved the progress it has made now.

President Mubarak added that Egypt was the country that "opened the door to peace." He went on to say that late president Anwar al- Sadat made his initiative when the region faced a deadlock and he visited Israel and reached the Camp David peace accord.

The president said the Arab countries suspended their relations with Egypt for 10 years in response to the accord, which the late president signed with Israel, but Egypt was not concerned much about the measure.

President Mubarak emphasized that, had it not been for Egypt, the Palestinians would not have sat at the negotiating table with the Israelis. Had it not been for Egypt's efforts, he added, the Madrid peace conference and meeting of the parties to the Middle East conflict would have been impossible. Had it not been for Egypt's efforts, he continued, Israel and the Palestinians would not have reached agreements on withdrawal from the West bank and Gaza. The president noted that Egypt still spares no effort so that peace may prevail in the Middle East, which is vital and very important.

President Mubarak replied to a question on the Israeli Government's response to the Arab summit's consensus that peace is a strategic option. He said the Israelis misunderstood the summit. He added: But I explained that for the first time in the 50 years since the Arab League was funded, the Arab countries agreed unanimously on the peace strategy. It is extremely good progress. It means that any country can establish peace with Israel under fair conditions, without being subjected to criticism from other countries, which is an importance precedent. Before that, the Arab countries refused any form of peace with Israel.

Answering a question on Israeli plans to build roads and bridges in the occupied Arab territories, President Mubarak said such news was circulated recently, but that they are not decisions and such plans will be

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submitted to the Israeli Cabinet. He expressed his hope that Israel will not make any move that would complicate the entire peace process, because this process is at a very critical juncture.

President Mubarak said he wants the public in all the Arab countries and in the world as a whole to feel that peace is coming and that there is progress in the peace process. He expressed his belief that "the ball is now in Israel's court."

President Mubarak commented on the disorder in the trade balance between the United States and Egypt and on ways to increase the volume of U.S. investment in Egypt. He said he discussed with U.S. Vice President Al Gore U.S. investments in Egypt, which represent only 4 percent of total U.S. foreign investments, a very low percentage. He noted that the Egyptian exports to the United States are valued at $600 million, while U.S. imports amount to $6 billion, which is unfair.

President Mubarak added that the ministers concerned from both sides discussed this issue in detail and reached good results that will appear in the future.

Discussing the development of closer Egyptian-U.S. ties in general, the president said Egypt's ties with the United states are very good. He noted that he visited Washington when he was vice president. He said even though problems may emerge between countries from time to time, such problems can be resolved with negotiations and continuous contacts. He affirmed that Egyptian- U.S. relations are facing no problems and that all the talk about problems are merely baseless rumors.

Egypt: Mubarak Warns of Unilateral Israeli Withdrawal From Lebanon

NC0108184896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1832 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Washington, 1 Aug (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has warned of the dangers that may result from a unilateral Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon without consideration of the Syrian Golan heights. President Mubarak, who is currently visiting Washington, warned in his dialogue with chief editors of Egyptian papers that in that case the region would experience an unstable situation that would have grave consequences.

Egypt: Mubarak Says al-Asad, 'Arafat To Come to Cairo 'Soon'

NC0108185096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1830 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Aug (MENA)—In Washington today, President Husni Mubarak announced at a meeting with the chief editors of Egyptian newspapers and the Egyptian media delegation that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will come to Cairo soon for consultations on the developments in the peace process and the discussions he held in the U.S. capital on the need to resume negotiations on the Syrian track.

President Mubarak said that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will also come to Cairo to hold talks with him on the course of the stalled Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and on the views he presented to the U.S. side on this matter.

The Egyptian president noted that upon his return to Cairo, he will hold many contacts with all Arab leaders to inform them of the results of his talks with President Bill Clinton and leading U.S. Administration and Congressional figures.

Egypt: Musa Notes Main Achievement of Mubarak's U.S. Visit

NC0208062396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0505 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Aug (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that the main achievement of President Husni Mubarak's visit to Washington lies in the U.S. Administration's emphasis of its commitment to the constants and foundations of the peace process, primarily the land-for-peace principle, continuation of Washington's role as an honest broker, its rejection of any measures that would negatively affect the peace process or delay it, and its acknowledgement of the importance of Egypt's independent role.

In a statement to AL-AHRAM published today, Musa noted that at his intensive meetings with the leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate, President Mubarak focused on proposing the strategic Arab peace option. Musa underlined that the ball is now in the Israeli court and stressed the importance of reaching a balanced and equitable peace, which is the substitute for chaos and tension in the region.

Egypt: Musa on Syrian Envoy, Nuclear Issue, Israeli Settlements

TA0208090996 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Aug 96 p A3

[Report from Washington by Yerah Tal]

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa yesterday said that if a secret meeting was indeed held between a Syrian envoy and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, this means "Israel and Syria have progressed many kilometers."

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The Egyptian foreign minister sounded surprised about the report published in HA'ARETZ yesterday, according to which a Syrian envoy visited Israel secretly on the eve of Netanyahu's visit to the United States. In reaction, Musa told HA'ARETZ: "I do not believe this story. It does not sound logical that Syria would send an envoy to Jerusalem. I do not think that such a thing has taken place, but let us wait and see. Time will tell.

Referring to the nuclear issue, Musa said that the problem with Israel remains unsolved. "Egypt's position has not changed, and if we want relations to continue prospering, this problem must be solved." Musa said he raised this issue in his recent meeting with Dr. Dore Gold, Netanyahu's political adviser. He noted, however, that the issue was not raised in the recent Mubarak-Netanyahu meeting in Cairo.

Regarding the settlements, Musa was unequivocal. "The entire peace process will crumble if settlements are established. You will not have both peace and settlements. Israel cannot enjoy both worlds and hold the stick at both ends."

He emphasized that Egypt has not accepted the settlements in the past and was in fact the one that determined the land-for-peace principle. He claims that what Egypt has received in the Sinai is good for Syria and the Palestinians as well. "We said that no settlement would remain in the Sinai, and the same principle will be implemented vis-a-vis Syria and the Palestinians as well," Musa said.

Egypt: Commentary Views Importance of Mubarak's Talks in U.S.

NC0108164296 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Commentary by Muhammad Sharaf: "It is Important for the U.S. Stance To Be Very Clear During the Current Critical Stage Through Which the Peace Process is Passing"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The special importance of the results of President Husni Mubarak's talks with U.S. President Clinton and other senior U.S. officials in the past two days lies in the fact that they emphasized the constants of the peace process in the Middle East. According to the statements released on the political aspects of these talks, there are no differences between Egypt and the United States on these constants. No doubt the circumstances through which the peace process is passing make this agreement of stances and emphasis of utmost importance. The U.S. stand on and role in the peace process and regarding the situation in the region in general must always be clear and free from doubts and vagueness because any vagueness would negatively effect the situation.

Needless to say, the latest developments in the peace process and the domestic circumstances in the United States, particularly as the presidential elections and Congressional along with elections are approaching, raise questions about the U.S. stance. Therefore, it is important that matters be quite clear regarding the constants of the peace process. President Mubarak's visit achieved this. These constants are:

1. There is no alternative to achieving peace in the region so that stability can prevail, stability that will guarantee international interests in the region. In addition, peace is the main requisite for development and progress for the peoples of the region. Development and progress are the basic factors for stability and security for all parties.

2. There is a need to create a suitable atmosphere to pick up the peace process where it was left off as soon as possible and on the basis of the principles on which agreement was reached in Madrid.

Since the stance of the new Israeli government, led by Binyamin Netanyahu, regarding the start of contacts with the parties to the negotiations is still shrouded in ambiguity, we can say that the constants of the peace process have become quite clear. In a reported statement to the British newspaper SUNDAY EXPRESS, former Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that incumbent Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is dreaming and deceiving himself and others if he believes that he can achieve peace with Syria and the Palestinians without returning the occupied territories. This statement sheds light on the entire situation. We are stating a fact when we say that all of Egypt's efforts, contacts, and moves are devoted to emphasizing this fact central to the entire current critical stage that the peace process is passing through. The Egyptian-U.S. summit talks in Washington on Tuesday [30 July] represented the climax of these efforts. It is worth noting that these talks gave major attention to the issue of terrorism, which is closely related to establishing peace in the region.

Regarding Egyptian-U.S. relations, particularly economic ties, they were given priority in the talks in Washington on various levels. It is taken for granted that bolstering Egypt's economic power is one of the most important factors for achieving stability and security in this extremely sensitive and important region of the world.

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Egypt: Papers Note Mubarak's 'Successful' U.S. Visit

NC0208103796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0515 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 2 Aug (MENA)—Cairo newspapers today underline that President Husni Mubarak's successful visit to the United States has returned the peace process in the Middle East to its sound and natural course. The visit also restored the joint Egyptian-U.S. will to act to narrow the gap on all negotiations tracks, as a prelude to resuming the negotiations on the principles on which the parties agreed, foremost of these being the land-for-peace principle and rejection of any measures that would negatively affect the peace efforts, particularly the construction of settlements and confiscation of land.

AL-AHRAM expects the efforts to advance the peace process to resume at the end of August without any delay because of the U.S. elections. The paper notes that these efforts will be preceded by a summit meeting between President Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in the second half of August. Mubarak will also hold contacts with the Lebanese and Palestinian leaders and brief the Arab countries on the results of his visit to the United States.

AL-AHRAM notes that during President Mubarak's talks in Washington it became clear that the United states does not agree to any violation or alteration of the existing agreements, particularly regarding the issue of settlements, and that the United States still asserts that the settlement activity and confiscation of land will negatively affect the peace process and deal it a fatal blow. The paper also notes that the United States understands the sensitive problem of Jerusalem and the possibility of finding a solution satisfactory to all parties.

Under the headline "The Next Move," AL-AHRAM says that after President Mubarak's talks in the United States succeeded in emphasizing the basic principles of the peace process in the Middle East, Arab public opinion is now waiting for the next step on the path of negotiations with Israel to reach a comprehensive and fair peace in the region in line with the practical course President Mubarak is pursuing in his endeavors to achieve Arab rights.

AL-AHRAM expects the next move by President Mubarak to entail a call for a comprehensive Arab meeting to coordinate stands. The paper says that clearly there will be a specific call on Israel and its new government to implement the commitments of the former Israeli Government in the peace process and the agreements reached with the Palestinians in Oslo, Cairo, and Washington, including the negotiations on the final status of the Palestinian territory and holy Jerusalem. The paper says that Israel is required to resume the stalled negotiations with Syria and Lebanon and to take further steps on the path toward a peaceful settlement.

AL-AHRAM notes that President Mubarak and U.S. President Bill Clinton were clear and specific in calling on the various parties to fulfill their commitments and resume the peace process. AL-AHRAM says that if the negotiations proceed more quickly, this would better serve the interests of the peoples of the region because this is the only successful way to entrench stability, security, and peace. Anyone who delays this process will bear a historical responsibility and grave consequences. Concluding its editorial, AL-AHRAM says that perhaps Israel will get the message from Washington, which is outlined in President Clinton's remark at his joint news conference with President Mubarak, that Egypt and the United States will not allow what has been achieved thus far on the path of peace to be squandered.

AL-AKHBAR chief editor Jalal Duwaydar says that President Husni Mubarak's important visit to the United States has achieved positive results, particularly regarding the issue of peace, the general situation in the Middle East, and bilateral relations between Egypt and the United States. He says that President Mubarak's talks, aimed at consolidating the U.S. stance on the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict in line with the resolutions of international legitimacy and emphasizing that the achievement of a comprehensive and fair peace in the Middle East, will guarantee the security of all parties. He notes President Clinton's emphasis that his country's stand on peace is firm and that he is committed to the Security Council resolutions, the Israeli-Palestinian agreements, the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, and the principle of land for peace.

Duwaydar cites circles close to the Egyptian-U.S. talks as saying that the discussions and exchange of views led to a sufficient reassurance that Washington will play an active role in the next stage, to ensure continuation of the peace process in a positive way, and that these U.S. assertions removed apprehension about the U.S. Administration's being busy with the elections that will take place in November and their negative effect on its efforts.

In an editorial headlined "Mubarak, a Special Kind of Leader," AL-AKHBAR says that President Husni Mubarak well deserves the repeated praise of his wisdom and leadership during the extremely successful visit he paid to the United States. The paper says that President Mubarak emphasized his leadership in more than

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one situation during his international news conference with U.S. President Bill Clinton. He emphasized his leadership when he responded to an extremely sensitive point—the issue of U.S. aid to Egypt—when he said that Egypt is aware that this aid will not continue indefinitely and that we realize this and are prepared for it. He underlined his leadership when he responded to what Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu considered to be the climax of pressure on Egypt, when he said before the U.S. Congress that Israel would not be in need of U.S. aid in the near future. President Mubarak said that if Netanyahu wants to reduce the aid for Egypt and Israel, we are not opposed to this.

Al-AKHBAR says that thus President Mubarak paid Netanyahu back twofold and explained in practice that the issue of U.S. aid will not have any effect on the existing friendly relations between equals and that Egypt is not a state that will be worried by talk of this issue, in the way certain people once imagined. The paper says President Mubarak demonstrated his wisdom and composure as he responded to a question on punishing the countries accused of terrorism, when he said that there is a difference between punishing governments and peoples. He said that meting out a punishment against a state as a whole on charges of terrorist acts will cause the people to feel disturbed and so we must pinpoint who is responsible for terrorism. The paper says that this is a new proposition that is worthy of consideration. Concluding its editorial, the paper says that it is the difficult circumstances that define and emphasize qualities of leadership and everyday Mubarak emphasizes that he is a special kind of leader.

The opposition newspaper AL-WAFD stresses that the timing of President Mubarak's visit to Washington was extremely successful, because it came after the theatrics that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu played to win the support and applause of members of the U.S. House of Representatives and senators. In its editorial today, AL-WAFD says that after Netanyahu's intransigent talk of peace, President Mubarak emphasized that the Arabs adhere to peace and stressed that Netanyahu's statements threaten peace. The paper asserts that President Mubarak has succeeded in getting to the hearts and minds of U.S. citizens and thus did not leave the arena empty for Netanyahu to play alone. The paper says that Mubarak's moves in Washington confirmed that we want peace, provided that they do not impose capitulation on us.

Under the headline "Peace Will Defeat Terrorism," AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the comprehensive concept on which Egypt and the United States agreed to achieve the cherished peace for all peoples of the region will have other benefits, such as stability, security, and defeating terrorism. The paper notes that President Mubarak's talks with President Clinton focused in large measure on confronting and eliminating terrorism.

AL-JUMHURIYAH underlined that reaching a fair and comprehensive peace would open the door for stability and mutual trust and decimate any hotbed of terrorism and extremism, as the peoples of the region will turn their attention to common issues and a better future. Peace will provide opportunities for economic cooperation and economic summits. The paper notes that Egypt has repeatedly said that progress in the peace process will have its effect on the third economic summit that will be held in Cairo in November.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says that certain specific steps must be taken, such as commitment to implementing the Oslo Agreement and the Washington Agreement, completion of the negotiations on the final status of the occupied territory and ending the Israeli settlement activity in the occupied Arab territory, which complicates the situation and makes the peoples despair of achieving peace. The paper asserts that this despair, which results from Israel's failure to adhere to the agreements reached with the Arab parties, is a sufficient reason for the terrorism and suicide operations that raise concern and dissipate the last chance for peace. The paper notes that in its capacity as one of the co-sponsors of the peace process, the U.S. continued commitment to its role and adherence to the principles worked out at the Madrid Conference and on which all parties agreed will be a tangible factor for eliminating terrorism from which every country, including the United States itself, suffers.

Sudan

Sudan: Opposition Radio Reports Omdurman University Closed

EA0108224396 (Clandestine) Voice of Sudan Voice of National Democratic Alliance in Arabic 0400 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The authorities of the Turabi National Islamic Front have closed the Omdurman National University indefinitely. This followed the announcement that the students of the National Democratic Alliance, running for seats on the students' union, had won by acclaim after the withdrawal of the Islamic orientation's list of students — which supports the authorities — from the elections, having realized that their defeat was almost certain. Our sources said the students of the Islamic orientation then resorted to violence and riots and assaults on their fellow students, who were forced to defend themselves. The front's authorities used the incidents as a pretext for closing the university indefinitely. [passage omitted]

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Premier—Kuwaiti, Saudi Security 'Indivisible'

MM0108132596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Aug 96 p 1

[Report by Ghunaym Muhammad al-Mutayri: "Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Saudi and Kuwaiti Security Is Indivisible Responsibility"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait — Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister, has confirmed that security issues were discussed during his visit to Saudi Arabia the day before yesterday.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he said: Kuwaiti and Saudi security is a joint responsibility shouldered by us, officials in the two countries.... We have a common destiny and our security is indivisible.

Shaykh Sa'd expressed his satisfaction with and optimism about the results of his visit to and talks in Saudi Arabia. He said that his visit the day before yesterday complemented his previous visit to Saudi Arabia last month.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received Shaykh Sa'd in Jeddah the day before yesterday. They discussed developments at the Gulf, Arab, Islamic, and international levels.

Diplomatic sources have confirmed that the Saudi-Kuwaiti talks focused on security and political issues. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Joint Statement Issued at End of Secretary Perry's Visit

LD0108125596 Riyadh SPA in English 1203 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Jeddah, July 31, SPA — At the end of U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry's visit to Saudi Arabia, a joint press statement was released pointing to Perry's two-day visit on July 30-31 and his meeting with second deputy premier, minister of defense and aviation and Inspector General Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz.

"In the spirit of cooperation and long-lasting friendship, Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, minister of defense and aviation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and William Perry, U.S. defense secretary have just completed discussion of joint plans for enhanced protection measures U.S. and other friendly forces in Saudi Arabia," the statement said.

They reafirmed the determination of both nations to defeat terrorism and to work for peace and stability throughout the region. They also reaffirmed their support to U.N. Security Council resolutions dealing with Iraq.

They agreed that coalition forces will move to new locations on Saudi facilities. This will greatly improve security while ensuring that the mission will continue to be carried out effectively.

Prince Sultan pledged the Saudi Government's full support for the enhanced security measures.

"These moves will be initiated immediately and completed on an urgent basis, without affecting the forces' ability to carry out their mission," the statement said.

Yemen

Yemen: AFP Reports 2 Killed, 5 Wounded in Bombing

NC0108160596 Paris AFP in English 1533 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Aden, Aug 1 (AFP) — Two people were killed and five others severely wounded when a bomb exploded in a government building at al-Dali, 200 kilometers (124 miles) north of Aden, Yemeni police said Thursday [1 Aug].

"The explosion killed two civilians and five others were gravely wounded, including three police officers, who were in the criminal investigation building at the time of the explosion in the city of al-Dali Tuesday, a police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The wounded were admitted to a hospital in Aden, the southern capital of Yemen, and the explosion is under investigation, he added.

A public building in al-Wabil, near al-Dali, was hit Friday by a rocket, the police officer said, adding that no one was injured.

In May, a Yemeni was killed and eight others were wounded in a dynamite explosion in Yafi 300 kilometers (186 miles) north of Aden, witnesses told AFP Monday.

In March, three people were killed in a grenade explosion at a movie theater in Yarim, 160 kilometers (99 miles) south of Sanaa.

Weapons and ammunition were abandoned during Yemen's civil war from May to July 1994, and Yemeni's, who consider firearms an integral part of their identity and national culture, have taken thousands of them.

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Iraq: Opposition Radio Says Olympic Weight Lifter Seeking Asylum

JN0108170696 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad, who is currently participating in the Olympic games in Atlanta, said recently said that he will seek political asylum in another state to escape the suffering inside Iraq.

The sources which reported this said that weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad sneaked out of his place of residence at the Olympic village to avoid the intelligence henchmen of the Saddamist regime who accompanied him to Atlanta.

The Iraqi weight lifter said that tyrant Saddam has turned the whole of Iraq into an extermination camp. This is a reference to the escalating executions and arrests by the Baghdad authorities against the Iraqi people.

Weight lifter Ra'id Ahmad, who carried the Iraqi flag during the Olympic games opening ceremony, won third place in his group.

Iraq: Regime Protests Airspace Violations by U.S., UK, France

JN0208060296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2005 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 1 Aug (INA)—Iraq has once again sent a protest to the Arab League over violations of its airspace by U.S., UK, and French military aircraft from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

In a letter to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, delivered by Iraq's representative to the Arab League, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said: We wish to inform you that these planes have continued their violations of the Iraqi airspace and carrying out 597 sorties during the period 1-15 July.

Iraq asked the Arab League secretary general to intervene with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to have them stop these violations which violate the Arab League Charter, the Collective Arab Defense Pact, the Arab Economic Unity agreement, the UN Charter, and international law.

Iraq said it holds these two states fully responsible for the damage caused by such acts, as well as by security, economic, and political threats sustained by the people and the state of Iraq.

In its letter which it requested to be distributed to Arab states, Iraq asserted its legal right to compensation for all the material and moral damage sustained by the people and state of Iraq in accordance with the principle of international responsibility.

On 8 July, Iraq's Arab League representative handed a similar letter to Arab League secretary general.

Iraq: Turkish 'Objection' to Hammer Force Reportedly Growing

JN0208105796 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 22 Jul 96 p 2

[From the "Standpoint" column by 'Isa Isma'il al-'Abbadi: "Turkey's Interests and Albright's Ideas!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Turkish politicians of all trends, whether in the government coalition or the opposition, are voicing greater objection to the presence of the so-called "Hammer Force" on Turkish territory. This is natural, since they are only expressing their national interests. But, Madeleine Albright, U.S. representative to the United Nations, does not want to acknowledge this fact.

Albright visited Ankara to secure an extension of the force's presence at Incirlik Base, thinking that Turkish politicians could possibly overlook the suspect motives behind the presence of this force on Turkish territory and its threat to the security of Turkey and the neighboring states, especially Iraq.

Albright, who brags more than anyone else about democracy and free choice for nations, feels no compunction about using America's entire might and terrorism against other nations in order to influence their national choices, independent thoughts, and legitimate interests. However, Turkish politicians of all trends are now raising their voice high against the U.S. military presence on Turkish territory. They are wondering about the real reasons behind the force's presence, especially since the war has been over for more than six years, but more so about its suspect role in threatening the national security of Turkey and Iraq — a role that does not take Turkey's national interests into account.

Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan and many other government officials and politicians have declared that it is in Turkey's interest to maintain good neighborly relations with Iraq and that they are in the process of expanding trade with Baghdad now that Iraq has signed the memorandum of understanding with the United Nations. Erbakan has also pointed out that southeast Turkey is more prosperous and secure when economic and trade ties with Iraq are strong.

Turkey's politicians and general public are more interested in trade and cooperation with Iraq than they are in Albright's ideas to destabilize the region and undermine its security by using excuses that events have proved baseless and false. They realize that Turkey and Iraq

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have a common history; are united by the bonds of Islam, geographic proximity, and common interests; and cannot live apart from one another. Historical and geographic factors are stronger than Albright's allegations and interests that come from overseas.

Iraq: Foreign Minister Protests Iranian Incursion to UN

JN0108190996 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1720 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 1 Aug (INA)—Iraq stressed that the blatant and unwarranted Iranian aggression against Iraq's territory and sovereignty constitutes a flagrant violation of the will of the international community, as represented by UN Security Council Resolution 598 of 1987 which established a ceasefire between the two countries.

In a message, which UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali received today, Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf said this aggression constitutes a clear violation of the provisions of the UN Charter and the foundations of international law.

In the message, which was relayed today, Thursday, to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali by Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent envoy to the United Nations, Iraq rejected any justifications for the flagrant Iranian aggression. Iraq also demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Iranian troops from the Iraqi territory. Iraq further demanded an end to such provocative acts, which run counter to good neighborliness and contradict Iran's allegations on its desire to resolve outstanding issues, normalize relations between the two countries, and to respect Iraq's unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

Iraq said the Iranian Government is fully responsible for the consequences of this aggression and warned against repeating it. Iraq demanded that the message be considered a UN Security Council document.

The message emphasized Iraq's legitimate right to take any measure it deems appropriate to defend the sovereignty of its air, waters, and land and to demand full compensation for the damage caused by the flagrant Iranian aggression in accordance with the international law.

Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf renewed Iraq's call to Iran through the United Nations to stop these attacks. He said he hopes the United Nations will shoulder its responsibilities in implementing the provisions of its charter and in deterring the aggression which is being launched by a member state against another member state, so that respect for the sovereignty, security, and safety of all its members would be guaranteed. This will safeguard peace and security in the region and the world.

In his letter to the UN secretary general, the foreign minister detailed the treacherous Iranian aggression on the Iraqi territories. He said: An Iranian Revolutionary Guard force estimated at 3,000 armed men riding in 100 vehicles of various types and carrying ammunition and heavy weapons infiltrated into the Iraqi territories in al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate and headed for the village of Kou Senjaq. At 0600 on 28 July 1996, the invader Iranian forces occupied the Haybat Sultan mountain and the outskirts of the Kou Senjaq city, heavily shelling with artillery some of the Iraqi civilian locations in the Kou Senjaq and Taqtaq areas.

This aggression killed and injured several civilians in addition to causing grave damage to public and private property in that area.

Iraq: Transport Minister Receives Chinese Delegation

JN0108144496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0840 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 1 Aug (INA) — Transport and Communication Minister Ahmad Murtada met with Shi Wi San [name as transliterated], director general of the West Asia and Africa Department in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, and his accompanying delegation.

The two sides discussed the means of boosting relations between the two friendly countries. Shi expressed his country's readiness to cooperate with Iraq in the transport and communications sectors through exchanging technical expertise. They also discussed the possibility of exporting certain materials and spare parts that will contribute to upgrading the efficiency of the machines that were destroyed during the U.S.-Zionist military aggression.

Iraq: Papers Commemorate Kuwait Invasion Anniversary

JN0208100196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0710 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 2 Aug (INA)—The "Great Call Day" [2 August 1990 invasion of Kuwait] was a preemptive response to the colonialist-Zionist conspiracy against Iraq and the Arab nation, domestic papers published here today asserted.

The papers said that the little agents had prepared a military atmosphere, accompanied by U.S. threats and provocative statements in preparation for the treacherous aggression against Iraq and its people to destroy its

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progress in all fields of life and its ambitious scientific project.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says that if we recall the events and the details of the enemies' movements and measures prior to the Great Call Day, we can see an escalation of hostile stands and anti-Iraq measures by the U.S. Administration. It urged others to adopt similar measures in view of the disappointment and frustration it felt as a result of the failure of all its conspiracies and the defeat of its every hostile measure to prevent Iraq and its leadership from going ahead with the sound principled course and insistence on effecting changes in the realities Iraq inherited from the ages of backwardness. Iraq wanted to build a modern Iraqi state based on independent decisionmaking.

The paper asks: Was the historic 2 August 1990 event an Iraqi response to an illegitimate and belligerent acts by the symbols of the Kuwaiti regime under the prevailing circumstances, or was it an expression of a larger case in which the Iraqis and their leadership responded to an extensive scheme that targeted their existence as a people and a state?

AL-THAWRAH says that all the facts, away from all the misguidance being practiced, indicate that what happened on the immortal Call Day was more than just a response to a limited case. It was a strike that aborted the great imperialist-Zionist plot to strike at Iraq, abolish its existence and pan-Arab role, and halt the march of its revolution, which had won the appreciation of the Arab nation and the admiration of the peoples of the world.

For its part, AL-'IRAQ says: The devastating Iraqi response was the appropriate revolutionary response to abort the links of the great conspiracy whose threads were woven by the cycles of evil and aggression at the U.S. Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency. That conspiracy was supported by huge funds allocated by some Arab rulers to spend on foreign armies and to wage an unfair war against proud, militant Iraq.

The paper adds that Iraq, motivated by its national and pan-Arab responsibilities, exercised self-restraint and did the impossible to make those rulers reconsider their disgraceful stands. However, they persisted in their arrogance — oblivious and disregardful of all Iraq's honest and sincere stands, sacrifices, and the blood of its martyrs over eight years in defense of the Arabism of the Gulf and its people against Iranian aggression.

The paper indicates that the United States rallied under its command all the forces of evil and wickedness to bring Iraq under the bombs and missiles of the armies of the 30-state aggression on the night of 16-17 January 1991. Earlier, a series of resolutions had been adopted against Iraq, including a land, sea, and air ban on the necessities of life.

AL-'IRAQ stresses that despite the fierce Zionist-colonialist onslaught against Iraq, the various methods employed and the parties involved, and the huge resources made available for the aggression, the Iraqis under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn managed to foil the colonialist-Zionist plot and reconstruct all that the evil ones destroyed in their treacherous aggression in exceptional time and depending on their own resources. They also launched a new building campaign to embroider the map of Iraq with great achievements that will stand there forever to tell the generations about the Iraqis' greatness and ability to create, innovate, and defeat the impossible.

Iraq: TV Reports Further on Iranian 26-27 Jul 'Aggression'

JN0108184696 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Groups of Khomeyni [Iranian Revolutionary] guards in 100 various vehicles carrying ammunition and heavy weapons infiltrated Iraqi territory in the al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate on 26/27 July 1996 and headed for the village of Kou Senjaq and occupied the Haybat Sultan mountain and the outskirts of Kou Senjaq.

Information from the region indicates that the guides of treason of the agent cliques, which sold themselves to the foreigner, agreed with the Iranian regime during a visit to Iran by criminal Khosrat [Rasul, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan Political Bureau member] on the entry of more than 1,500 men of the Khomeyni guards across the border of (Bachmal) on 27 July. The column of more than 100 vehicles, left for the al-Salam camp in al-Sulaymaniyah heading from there to Haybat Sultan. This column attacked Kou Senjaq on 28 July with the participation and support of the guides of treason in reconnaissance. Thus, they sank further into the mud of treason.

Arrivals from the region said that this new aggression, which took place as a result of the deterioration of the security situation in the Kurdistan Autonomous Region in light of the control over the region by the cliques of sabotage and the absence of the central authority, resulted in heavy damage to property and power lines. Water and electricity supplies to citizens in the region and the surrounding areas were also cut, and innocent people were killed.

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The arrivals added that several shells fell on the village of (Hartuna) as a result of the aggressor Iranian forces' shelling on 28 July. A citizen was martyred and others were wounded in the shelling. The arrivals said that peaceful demonstrations were staged in Irbil on 30 July to protest and denounce the Iranian aggression. Armed men belonging to the clique of the guides of treason dispersed them.

Iraq: Radio Gives Details on 'Recent Saddamist Aggression'

JN0108160896 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Subsequent to our previous statements, and in order to provide details of our zealous mujahidin's heroic operations and confrontation of the recent Saddamist aggression, a statement recently issued by the mujahidin of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq said that the defeatist regime's forces sustained heavy material and human losses by the mujahidin who joined the sons of our heroic tribes against the criminal 'Aflaqites [reference to Ba'th Party founder Michel 'Aflaq].

The statement added that the remnants of the regime were defeated by the sons of our people, leaving behind more than 50 people killed and 16 wounded, in addition to the destruction of three dump trucks.

The statement described our mujahidin's fighting as resolute. It said that the mujahidin forced the tyrant's forces [words indistinct] on 23 July to carry out a similar aggression against the outskirts of the al-Nasiriyah Governorate, but did not succeed.

The new aggression by the forces of the collapsing Baghdad regime targeted our tribes in [word indistinct] Bani-Hasan Subdistrict of [word indistinct] in al-Nasiriyah Governorate where the Al Juwaybir and Al Rahmah tribes live.

Iraq: Struggle Escalates Between Sab'awi and Saddam Fedayeen

JN0108163996 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The struggle among members of the tyrant's family escalated recently following serious differences among them. These differences resulted from competition for devouring the Iraqis' funds and killing innocent people. Bloody clashes erupted in the al-Hawijah District, north of Baghdad, among groups which are loyal and close to Sab'awi [Ibrahim al-Hasan] and the Saddam Fedayeen forces which are supervised by 'Udayy, the tyrant's eldest son.

Many people were killed or wounded on both sides in these armed clashes. Our sources said that the fighting which took place on 17 July, the date on which the tyrant celebrates the anniversary of his ill-omened 1968 coup, resulted from serious differences and enmity which aggravated after the tyrant put his half-brother Sab'awi under house arrest and after the latter tried to flee Iraq in the hope of surviving Saddam's liquidation of even his closest aides.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Says Officer, Others Killed in Attack

JN0108172096 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The triumphant Islamic Revolution's resistance forces continued their heroic operations against the tyrant Saddamist forces. Within this framework, the mujahidin sources said a mujahidin group of the sons of our people attacked one of the tyrant regime's military positions in the al-Shafi area in al-Basrah Governorate on 17 July.

The sources added that in their attack, the resistance heroes used light and medium weapons, and that a lieutenant and four of the regime's personnel were killed and others sustained serious wounds. A position was destroyed, three tents were burned, and two stockpiles of weapons were destroyed in the attack.

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Israel: Netanyahu Sends Message to al-Asad via King Husayn

TA0208110796 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 2 Aug 96 pp 1-2

[Report by Ben Kaspit, Hemi Shalev, 'Ada Kohen, and Shefi Gabay]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Prime Minister Binyamin last Saturday [27 July] held a secret meeting with King Husayn in London. Netanyahu used Husayn for relaying a message to Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad saying: "Let us resume the talks; we have something to talk about." Today Husayn departs for Damascus, where he will submit Netanyahu's proposal. [passage omitted]

Dr. Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, held talks with the senior Jordanian echelon in Amman yesterday. On 5 August Netanyahu will hold an official visit to Jordan, where he will receive al-Asad's answer to his secret message. Political sources in Jerusalem and Washington yesterday assessed that there are good chances for the resumption of Israeli-Syrian negotiations in the foreseeable future.

A senior political source who is close to the prime minister yesterday said that the "Lebanon First" formula proposed by Israel is unacceptable to Syria and Lebanon, and apparently it will not serve as the basis for the resumption of the talks. At this stage it appears that the negotiations will be resumed on the basis of the format in which they were conducted during the days of the Labor government. It is possible that they will even be held in the same location.

Yesterday a senior political source confirmed the reports on the meeting between Netanyahu and a "Syrian envoy." The source went on to term this as an "insignificant affair." He said that the meeting was held several days prior to the prime minister's visit to the United States, but that that "had no practical political significance." [passage omitted]

Israel: 'Secret' Syrian Envoy Said To Reside in London

TA0208101896 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 2 Aug 96 pp 1, 8

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Peri]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Syria is firmly denying the report published in HA'ARETZ yesterday about a secret meeting of a Syrian envoy with the prime minister on the eve of Netanyahu's visit to the United States. [passage omitted]

As far as is known, Netanyahu and one of his advisers met a person of Syrian origin who resides in London. The Syrian quickly briefed Damascus about the contents of the meeting — which was kept secret.

According to information obtained by YEDI'OT AHARONOT, this is not the first meeting of the said person with high-level Likud elements. The fact that this person does not reside in Syria, rather in Europe, yesterday made it easier for official Syrian spokesmen to flatly deny the report about the secret meeting. [passage omitted]

Israel: Netanyahu Said Trying To Resume Syrian Track Through Russia

TA0208075996 Tel Aviv NOVOSTI NEDELI in Russian 2 Aug 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Binyamin Netanyahu has been attempting to restart the Israeli-Syrian peace talks vehicle and to steer it to a road different from the one favored by the previous Government of Israel. The Foreign Ministry and a team of advisers are working on various theories and seeking out new options, including the possibility of promoting the Syrian track through Russian channels — namely, to reach Damascus via Moscow.

This approach, initiated by Netanyahu, was favorably received in Moscow, which is highly interested in regaining an active role in the Middle East peace process. A discussion on the issue held yesterday at the Israeli Foreign Ministry was attended by Russian Ambassador to Israel Aleksandr Bovin and Foreign Ministry Acting Director General Eytan Bentzur. The meeting addressed ways of promoting the Israeli-Syrian peace process, with an emphasis on Binyamin Netanyahu's proposal usually referred to as "Lebanon First."

While the Russians doubt al-Asad will accept Netanyahu's terms and are certain the Syrians will not cede their "land for peace" principle, they agreed to mediate in the "Lebanon First" negotiations.

Israeli political sources maintain that the Syrian envoy who visited our country about a month ago was really... a Russian emissary authorized to negotiate on behalf of Damascus.

Bovin and Bentzur further discussed matters pertaining to Russia's real estate in Israel. The parties agreed that the property on which talks have been held recently, will be officially handed over to Russia in the coming days.

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Israel: Netanyahu Urges Implementation of Agreements With Jordan

TA0208090696 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Aug 96 pp A1, A12

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Dore Gold, the prime minister's political adviser, yesterday visited Jordan to prepare Netanyahu's visit. He met Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and Prince Hasan, who demanded that Israel honor a series of promises made upon the signing of the peace agreement almost two years ago.

The Jordanians complained that many understandings with Israel have not been implemented, mainly in the economic and water spheres. Among other things, Jordan is demanding an easing of the transfer of Jordanian goods to the West Bank and is calling for the supply of water as agreed in the peace agreement. The outgoing government had promised Jordan to raise international aid for building new bridges on the Jordan River and to develop water sources, but the funds have not arrived.

Prime Minister Netanyahu proposes to offer Jordan to establish frameworks for dealing with and facilitating the outstanding bilateral issues.

Netanyahu yesterday convened a meeting with Finance Minister Dan Meridor and senior Treasury officials to discuss ways to acquiesce to Jordan's demands. Netanyahu said he is giving very high priority to relations with Jordan and that he wants to solve the remaining problems.

Netanyahu requested that all the economic agreements with Jordan be properly fulfilled and that efforts be made to ease the transfer of Jordanian goods via the bridges — including easing the security checks. A proposal was raised for solving Jordan's water problems involving the purification of salt water Israel has pledged to provide to Jordan and financing the development of new water sources. The proposal calls for working out a "financial package" from Israeli and international sources for developing systems for purifying, desalinating, siphoning, and supplying water. [passage omitted]

Israel: Cabinet Issues Decisions on Settlements

TA0208103796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0935 GMT 2 Aug 96

[News conference by Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave following a cabinet meeting outside the Prime Minister's Bureau — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Nave] The government was today briefed on several issues and passed several resolutions. At the beginning of the session, the internal security minister briefed the cabinet on Palestinian Legislative Council Member Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir's opening an office in Jerusalem. The foreign minister said his office took immediate action, relaying a message to the Palestinian Authority [PA] that said the government will not tolerate such actions, and that we demand that the office be closed at once. The foreign minister said that Yasir 'Arafat informed his ministry in reaction that the PA's governmental activities in Jerusalem would be discontinued. The prime minister said that we take a grave view of the operation of PA offices in Jerusalem, and we will see to it that such activities are discontinued.

The Shin Bet chief delivered a statement at the cabinet meeting on media reports on Ehud Yatom's remarks. The Shin Bet chief said the following: The General Security Service acts to thwart and prevent terrorist attacks, and not to punish terrorists. As any civilized state, the State of Israel believes that it is the Shin Bet's job to prevent terrorist attacks, not to punish. The Shin Bet chief further said: I would like to add that whenever Shin Bet staffers appear before inquiry commissions, courts, Knesset committees, or any other forums, they are instructed to tell the truth only, and I know they do so. I thought it would be appropriate for me to elucidate these issues, on which public argument is waged, beyond any doubt.

The Shin Bet chief also delivered a security report, which comes under Clause 44 of the Basic Law: The Government.

On the issue of planning and construction, the government decided today that in the sphere of construction in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, government ministries' activities would be subordinate to the defense establishment and the defense minister, stay within the framework of the various approved state budget articles, and follow the prime minister's instructions. The cabinet further decided that any new construction license, any discussion of master plans, and the validation of these plans would be given only upon approval of the defense minister. I would like to note that some ministers had reservations about the need for the defense minister's approval, and several ministers suggested establishing a

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ministerial committee on settlement affairs. These reservations were not put up for vote, and the resolution was endorsed unanimously.

I would like to inform you of the remarks made by the prime minister at the cabinet meeting with respect to this resolution. The prime minister said: The previous government fettered and shackled the natural development of Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, although it did not shackle the Arab settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, or the Jewish settlements within the Green Line. For instance, if there was a plan to build a kindergarten in a place such as Ari'el, they had to petition the ministerial committee on special cases, and even then, they could not be certain that they would receive a permit. Such a situation is naturally unacceptable to us, and we are therefore acting today to amend the discrimination against the Jewish settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. This process of unshackling naturally entails a supervision of building and settlement proceedings, as is customary in any government; these proceedings have been put in writing. I would like to stress in this respect that the prime minister further said that the decision aims to revoke the sweeping prohibitions which created unjustified discrimination and prevented the development of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza settlements. He further emphasized that if a proposal for the establishment of a new settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza is made in the future, today's cabinet resolution will not suffice to endorse it, and it will require special approval obtained in a separate debate in a government plenum.

[Qol Yisra'el political correspondent Shlomo Raz] Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave, I would like to understand: Will a building drive start in settlements beyond the Green Line this coming Sunday [4 August]?

[Nave] This cabinet resolution is not operational. It does not determine a course of action about to be launched on a certain date. It aims to set down rules of processes that will be simpler than the ones set down by the previous government.

[Raz] Another matter emerging from your statement is that no new settlements can be built without special approval of the prime minister and the cabinet.

[Nave] This is quite clear: Any suggestion to establish a new settlement will require a special debate and special approval by the cabinet plenum.

[Raz] What about the expansion of settlements beyond the so-called natural needs?

[Nave] There is natural development in the Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza settlements. As the cabinet statement I read to you says, there are rules on how proceedings can be undertaken. They will require the supervision of the defense establishment and the defense minister, and will have to stay within the bounds of the state budget.

Israel: Settler Council Voices 'Disappointment' Over Cabinet Decision

TA0208112496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza applauds the government's decision on what the council terms the annulment of the biased decrees against Israeli citizens in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza settlements. At the same time, the council voices disappointment in the government's failure to endorse practical resolutions on development, building, and the construction of new roads in these areas. The settlement council's reaction was reported by our correspondent Gil Litman.

Knesset Member Hayim Ramon says, lacking courage to acknowledge its policy, the government has issued a vague statement. Speaking with our correspondent this afternoon, Ramon said the establishment of new settlements required government approval in the past, too. He believes that the government policy aims to considerably enlarge the settlements, which is liable to cripple the agreements we have achieved with the Palestinians.

Israel: Settlers Have 'Mixed Feelings' After Meeting Netanyahu

TA0208110896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 2 Aug 96 p 2

[Report by Evelyn Gordon]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Leaders of the Jordan Valley settlements emerged from their first meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday with mixed feelings.

David Levi, chairman of the Jordan Valley Regional Council, described Netanyahu's approach as "very positive," and termed the meeting "good."

But Tami 'Atiya, a spokeswoman for the Jordan Valley Settlement Committee, said her organization was "neither disappointed nor happy" with the meeting.

Both Levi and 'Atiya said they were pleased with Netanyahu's apparent support for the development and growth of the valley communities — especially for the building of better roads, which are essential to attracting new residents. In particular, the residents want a major

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investment in the valley's main highway, which has been the site of several fatal road accidents.

"He was very positive on this subject (of roads)," 'Atiya said.

"He said his government will do everything in its power to develop the valley," Levi stressed. "And right now, this declaration is more important than anything."

However, Netanyahu declined to discuss residents' demand that he fulfill his pre-election promise to annex the valley. 'Atiya said he did not actually reject the idea, but stressed that he is interested in renewing contacts with the Palestinian Authority right now.

Though Levi had attached great importance to this issue prior to the meeting, he said he was not disturbed. It is not reasonable to expect specifics from a government which is still just getting organized, he said.

The issue of water was also raised, since residents are unhappy that the Oslo Accords promise so much water to the PA. 'Atiya said Netanyahu's response was that "agreements must be honored," but that the government will look into the possibility of importing water.

Another issue of importance to the residents was the re-opening of a baptismal site on the Jordan River, about two kilometers east of Jericho, which was declared a closed military area by the previous government after the Oslo Accords were signed.

'Atiya said this is the third most important Christian site in Israel, and is crucial to the region's tourism industry.

Netanyahu said he favors reopening the site in principle, but would have to check to make sure there are no legal problems.

"He said this government will be different than its predecessors," 'Atiya concluded, noting that the last Likud government had badly neglected the Jordan Valley. "What will be in reality? We don't know."

Israel: Golan Settler Leaders Say Netanyahu To Develop Area

TA0108163696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of the Qatzrin Local Council and the head of the Golan Regional Council conferred with the prime minister in Jerusalem this afternoon. The cabinet secretary and the director of the prime minister's bureau also participated in the meeting. Qatzrin Local Council head Sami Bar-Lev told our correspondent Gil Litman that Binyamin Netanyahu promised to develop the settlements in the area.

Israel: Minister Qahalani Opposes Establishment of New Settlements

TA0108142796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Public Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani has stressed that he opposes the establishment of new settlements in the territories. In an exclusive statement to our correspondent Shim'on Aran, Minister Qahalani underscored the need to enlarge some of the existing settlements such as those in the 'Etzyon Bloc, the Jordan Valley, and Ari'el, in addition to the settlements located near the road that crosses Samaria.

On another development, Qahalani expressed his support for the implementation of redeployment in Hebron while providing security for the Jewish inhabitants of the Jewish Quarter in the city and in Qiryat Arba'.

Israel: 'Arutz 7 'Worried' About Netanyahu's Settlement Policy

TA0108135696 (Internet) 'Arutz 7 News Service in English 31 Jul 96

[Commentary by Uri Elitzur: "Time To Get Moving"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] I agree; it is still too early to judge the Netanyahu government. On the other hand, though, it has already passed the infancy stage, and we can — and must — begin to develop our first impressions. The left, starting from the very first day, has yelped, and barked, and bitten, regarding every aspect of the government's policies, starting from its economic plan and up to the Prime Minister's wife. They did it when the Likud was in the opposition, and how much more so can they be expected to continue now. I can even identify with them somewhat; they are very frustrated at the public for voting incorrectly, and for failing to comprehend what the Labor campaign managers tried to explain to them for so many months via the written and electronic media.

However, I think that it is about time for the politically conservative camp, too, to begin to open a critical eye, to say what has to be said, and not just to parrot, "patience, patience." It is not healthy for any organization, and certainly not the government, to function without any constructive criticism, especially when such advice comes from its supporters. Personally, my first impression of the present government is mixed. Economically, it has shown resolution and determination, but I will not get into that right now. In its first international test, the government, represented by the Prime Minister, did very well, and deserves our praise. He made his first acquaintances with the Americans and with our Arab neighbors, under the scrutiny of a not overly-friendly

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world press. He managed to whirl coolly in and out of neighboring countries — regimes which we could have expected would greet him quite coldly and with varying degrees of pressure. On this first round of international touring, Netanyahu was very successful, and was able to surprise all of the commentators here who were just waiting for him to slip up; when reading their reports of his visit, you could feel the disappointment that he caused them. He didn't get caught up in arguments and debates, on the one hand, but did not fold, on the other.

In my opinion, the secret of his success lay in his initiative and momentum. Instead of waiting for his political opponents to organize themselves, he ran ahead. He set the pace and the style according to his own needs and interests. Whoever has followed Netanyahu's political career knows that his successes generally follow this pattern. In gaining the leadership of his party, he was able to control the primaries, and the constitution, and the convention; there were not a few objections and protesters at every stage, but they generally began after the moves had already been made. During the election, too, Netanyahu and his staff controlled the issues — Jerusalem and security — and the pace: short, to-the-point ads which repeated the same points over and over. Peres and Labor found themselves reacting time and again, always a bit behind, always letting the events lead them.

It is because of this characteristic of Netanyahu's leadership that I find myself worried at the government's stance concerning building and settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. I raise this criticism at this early stage, and do not recommend waiting patiently, specifically because of the aspect that I have mentioned. As of now, in the settlement sphere, not a thing has moved. Even the finished apartments that have been locked up since the beginning of the previous government, have not yet been made available. No special ministerial committee for settlement has been established, the "dry-out" regulations have not yet been repealed, and I need not even mention that no serious plans for building have been started or even budgeted. In this matter, I do not see the initiative and the pace-setting that is Netanyahu's trademark; this worries me. As is quite well-known, the settlement and building activities in Yesha' [Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza] have many, many enemies in Israel and throughout the world. They have now been granted the time they needed to prepare and to organize themselves and to work together for their common goal.

A meeting between the Prime Minister and the Yesha' Council is to take place this afternoon (Sunday) [28 July]. This will be the first such meeting, for some reason, and it will most likely be held amidst much pomp and celebration, with a doubtful amount of concrete issues being discussed. Perhaps it will be the beginning of real work being carried out in these areas; let us hope so. Even if this is the case, though, it will be very close to being too late.

Israel: Police Surround New LC Member's Office in Jerusalem

TA0108152796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Police sources told our correspondent Rajih Qaddur that the opening of an office by Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir, member of the Palestinian Legislative Council [LC] from the Jerusalem constituency, in the Bayt Hanina neighborhood, north of Jerusalem, is in contravention of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement, and therefore he must close the office. Police forces surrounded the office after it was opened.

'Abd-al-Qadir said that he had begun to receive the public in this office, adding that his opening an office in Jerusalem falls within the framework of his election to the LC from this constituency.

Israel: PA Given 'Ultimatum' To Close Jerusalem Office by 2 Aug

TA0108181196 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The government has given the Palestinians an ultimatum to close the new office opened in Jerusalem by Palestinian Authority [PA] member Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir by tomorrow morning.

Our political correspondent reports that the government warned the PA that otherwise it will use its authority to close the office, since, and I quote, it is a clear violation of the agreements with the PA. [passage omitted]

Israel: Contacts With PA To Be Severed if Jerusalem Office Retained

TA0208050496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Israel is threatening to sever all contacts with the Palestinian Authority [PA] if it does not close an office in the Bayt Hanina neighborhood in Jerusalem. The office was opened by Palestinian Legislative Council Member Hatim 'Abd-al-Qadir yesterday. 'Abd-al-Qadir said his objective was to help solve the problems of Palestinians living in Jerusalem.

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Officials in Jerusalem say if the PA does not respond to Israel's ultimatum, the scheduled meeting of the Israel-Palestinian steering committee will be delayed. [passage omitted]

The government's coordinator of activities in the territories, Major General Oren Shahor, is to discuss violations of the peace accord with Palestinian official Jamil al-Tarifi in a meeting today.

Israel: 'Concern' in Jordan Over Sharon Opposition to Joint Airport

TA0108132296 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 1 Aug 96 p 5

[Report by 'Oded Granot]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Great concern has been voiced in Jordan over National Infrastructure Minister Ari'el Sharon's opposition to the construction of the Israeli-Jordanian airport in al-'Aqabah.

In the past few days, senior Jordanian officials have contacted the Foreign Ministry and the Israeli Embassy in Jordan seeking to urgently clarify whether the National Infrastructure Ministry's negative position on the joint project, as expressed at the last meeting of the committee of ministerial directors, indeed reflects the position of the Netanyahu government.

The appeal to the Israeli Embassy was made through the Jordanian Transportation Ministry in Amman, while the Foreign Ministry was directly contacted by the offices of Prime Minister and Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti.

In both cases, Jerusalem was asked to explain whether Israel intended to renege on the plan which was consolidated by the Peres government with U.S. support.

The total cost of the project in question is $80 million and it is designed to increase the amount of tourism to both countries. The construction of the airport will also provide work for Jordanian workers. The Americans have allocated $500,000 for a feasibility study on the issue.

The National Infrastructure Ministry's opposition to the airport has infuriated the Jordanians, who are especially sensitive to the positions voiced by Minister Sharon. Jordanian Transportation Minister Nasir al-Lawzi told THE JORDAN TIMES yesterday that Jordan had learned about the National Infrastructure Ministry's position from the media but "we have officially been told nothing."

Israeli officials attempted to reassure the Jordanians yesterday and explained that Netanyahu has not yet decided on this issue and that the stand taken by the National Infrastructure Ministry does not necessarily reflect the position of the whole government. It is almost certain that the Jordanians will raise the issue of the joint airport when Netanyahu visits Jordan next week. [passage omitted]

Israel: Netanyahu on Efforts To Uproot 'Terrorism'

TA0208093796 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV (SHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 2 Aug 96 pp 6-7

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by correspondent Ben Kaspit in Jerusalem on 31 July]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Kaspit] Mr. Prime Minister, are you not concerned that the Iranians will use the return of the bodies of Fink and Alsheikh as a lever for getting rid of the American effort to isolate them in the world?

[Netanyahu] I do not believe that there is a link between the two. I made clear to German Minister Bernd Schmidbauer the distinction we make between humanitarian gestures, such as the return of MIA bodies, and the basic issue of the Iranian Government's policy. Our opposition to Hizballah is not weakened or reduced because between one attack and the next they might make a deal with us to release MIA's. That is absurd. We have also returned bodies to them, and the SLA [South Lebanese Army] has released their prisoners in Lebanon. That is why I would not exaggerate in linking those deals to problems related to the issue of terrorism.

I want to stress that no conclusions should be drawn about organizations or states only because they accede to a humanitarian gesture that any body or organization would have made. On the other hand, I want to say that I very much appreciate the humanitarian activity of the German Government. I even took the trouble to thank Chancellor Kohl personally. I believe his action should be appreciated. [end Netanyahu]

On Tuesday, the G-7 leaders met in Paris, which in the wake of the latest wave of terrorist attacks, became a "terrorist conference." The Americans tried to pass a resolution calling for the imposition of sanctions on four terrorist states: Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. The Europeans, as expected, opposed, and the motion failed to be approved. Netanyahu, as expected, did not like that.

[Kaspit] Are you disappointed about what happened in Paris?

[Netanyahu] I believe that the American concept is basically the correct one. I believe that we cannot uproot the waves of terrorism and solve the problem without using pressure on the states behind the various

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terrorist organizations. I regretted the fact that more encompassing measures were not taken in that context. I hope that the policy of the seven industrialized states will change in the future and be influenced by the spirit of U.S. policy. [end Netanyahu]

Netanyahu is using diplomatic language, but in internal discussions he is blunter. He will bring up the issue when he visits various European capitals in the coming months. He is expected to be in Paris, Bonn, and London. "Yes," he says, "I will definitely raise it with European heads of state."

[Kaspit] Do you have serious criticism of the Europeans?

[Netanyahu] Definitely. To our regret, terrorism has become a daily problem, but it also has long-term repercussions. Terrorism is a threat to world order. At present, it directs its efforts at removing the United States from the Middle East, at harming the Western presence here. This terrorism also has bases in the West and operates there. There will be no alternative to dealing with it in a more resolute and comprehensive way. [end Netanyahu

[Kaspit] Let us return to our region. Over the past few days there have been reports about a split in Hizballah. Is there a trend toward a decline in that organization's activities?

[Netanyahu] I would be cautious about drawing far-reaching conclusions about that organization. It is a very compact organization which is hard to infiltrate and difficult to make an intelligence evaluation about. The only thing we know is that at present it is at war with us and it is not showing signs of a genuine change in direction. We are witnessing a relative lull in its actions against us, although the attacks continue. I tend to view the relative lull as linked to the upcoming elections in Lebanon, and I do not put too much importance in reports about this or that split. [end Netanyahu]

Intelligence reports, which have piled up over the past few weeks, which Netanyahu takes more seriously, show the first signs of Syrian involvement in the latest wave of terrorism.

Washington is making a huge intelligence effort in that field. For the time being, the prime minister is careful about what he says, but he would be prepared to pay a great deal to prove — in Washington — the Syrian involvement in the Dhahran fatal bombing or the TWA 800 flight.

[Kaspit] In Paris, the Americans talked about four terrorist states — Iran, Iraq, Sudan, and Libya. What about Syria? Do you plan to bring up Syrian involvement in terrorism in your upcoming discussions with the Americans?

[Netanyahu] Look, the information about the attacks in Dhahran and the TWA explosion can change from day to day. I can tell you that we are not wasting any effort in the intelligence field to help the United States to find out who is behind the Dhahran attack. If it transpires that the TWA explosion was a terrorist attack, we will also turn our efforts in that direction. We will do everything to assist our American friends to resolve those disasters.

[Kaspit] You use the cautious expression "time will tell." In other words, you do not rule out Syrian involvement in those attacks?

[Netanyahu] I do not yet know who carried out those bombings, whether they were perpetrated by organizations or organizations under the auspices of states, or ones which operate within the boundaries of certain states. We must wait until the picture becomes clearer. I believe that this will happen soon.

[Kaspit] Are there at this stage traces leading to Damascus?

[Netanyahu] I do not wish to draw hasty conclusions. We must receive intelligence and decide accordingly. Usually, after an attack happens, we know. One thing I am sure of is that in the end we will know who perpetrated it and who is behind it. I have no doubt about that. [end Netanyahu]

Netanyahu does not name Syria, but by paying attention to the tone he uses, one can identify the heavy hints he is dropping, which from time to time become threatening.

In recent weeks Netanyahu has been sending major hints toward Damascus. The peak was when he made it clear in a talk with journalists that Israel would not allow an escalation in south Lebanon without making the Syrians also suffer. The Air Force attack on a camp belonging to the Abu-Musa terrorist organization was ordered by Netanyahu personally, and constituted his first declaration of intentions on that issue. Abu-Musa's organization operates under Syrian auspices from an office in Damascus, and the bombed base is located in an area under Syrian control in Lebanon. A major hint.

[Kaspit] When will the first meeting of the joint Israeli-U.S. counterterrorism committee be held?

[Netanyahu] I think we set a target for the end of this month. I agreed with the Americans that the committee would be headed by Foreign Ministry officials and an assistant secretary of state. We will also send one of our senior defense officials, and they will send a senior CIA official.

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[Kaspit] Do you have a specific aim in these deliberations? Do you plan to raise specific Israeli proposals which would aid the United States to lead a global strategy against terrorism?

[Netanyahu] Definitely. I have lots of ideas in that field, and I hope to raise them first within the context of that committee.

[Kaspit] How do you view the relative letup in terrorism in Israel. Do you foresee the imminent capture of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine squad that operated in the Bet Shemesh area?

[Netanyahu] We are very actively looking for that squad. According to the signs we have, one band carried out all the attacks in that area. I cannot say at present where they came from and where they went, but we have strong theories about that. We are wasting no effort to round up the band, and we are taking a series of defensive steps as well as deterrent moves to prevent such attacks from recurring. It involves organizing differently and using new measures, both defense and deterrent.

[Kaspit] How do you explain the relative lull in terrorism against Israel?

[Netanyahu] There is a relative lull, but I cannot say that terrorism will not be resumed. What I can say is that if it happens they will pay a very steep price. We will not agree to having areas turned over to the Palestinian Authority [PA] serve as launching grounds for murderous gangs of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] or Islamic Jihad. We will operate on two fronts: first, to firmly demand that the PA fulfill its commitment on security, and second, to give our forces freedom of action to act against terrorist elements in these areas.

[Kaspit] Does that mean we will put into effect those clauses in the Oslo accord which permit the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] to enter Palestinian towns if there are serious instances of terrorism?

[Netanyahu] We will go anywhere we find necessary to defend Israeli citizens.

[Kaspit] In other words, you are saying that Israel will not hesitate to enter Nabulus or Ramallah in hunting down the murderous Hamas gang.

[Netanyahu] I repeat, we will go anywhere we feel we must to defend Israeli citizens. I do not choose that as a first option, but I do not deny myself that option. I declare simply: We will not agree to return to a situation where there are mass terrorist attacks every few months.

[Kaspit] What is the current level of cooperation with the PA on terrorism?

[Netanyahu] I receive various reports about that. There is cooperation. [end Netanyahu]

The cooperation Netanyahu refers to was reached after the last wave of attacks reached an unprecedented peak. The Shin Bet and the Palestinian Preventive Security Service worked together in all fields. Even the intelligence reports by Brigadier General Ya'aqov 'Amidror praised 'Arafat for his resolution and for seriously harming the Hamas terrorist infrastructure.

[Kaspit] Has there been any change in the level of cooperation since the new government came to power?

[Netanyahu] At this stage, I get the impression that there have not been significant changes. I hope there will not be any since that would not be good for either side.

Israel: Al-Sultan Ya'qub MIA Affair Said Near Resolution

TA0108140096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The families of the three al-Sultan Ya'qub MIA's, Feldman, Baumel, and Katz, are about to meet with the head of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Manpower Branch about the fate of their loved ones.

A senior Palestinian source said that information regarding the graves of the three was obtained about a year ago from three Fatah men in Jordan who buried the bodies of the three MIA's. The three said they moved the bodies of the three from al-Sultan Ya'qub to Damascus where they were buried in a Palestinian graveyard in the city without informing the Syrian authorities that the three were Israeli soldiers. The senior Palestinian source told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that one of the three Fatah members was brought to Israel for medical treatment and provided accurate information regarding the location of the graves.

Israel asked the United States to intervene with Syria, but the contacts were disrupted due to Operation Grapes of Wrath. Yasir 'Arafat also raised the issue during his meeting with President al-Asad last week.

Sources in the prime minister's bureau refuse to react, but our political correspondent Shlomo Raz says that high-level officials past and present are familiar with most of the information about the issue and asked to delay its publication due to its sensitive nature. A very senior official told our correspondent he believes the affair of the three al-Sultan Ya'qub MIA's is about to be resolved.

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Israel: Mordekhay, Levi Oppose National Security Council

TA0108121296 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 1 Aug 96 p A1

[Report by Aluf Ben]

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay and Foreign Minister David Levi oppose the establishment of a National Security Council at the Prime Minister's Office to be headed by Major General (reserve) David 'Ivri. A few days ago Netanyahu said he is committed to his decision regarding the establishment of the council, adding that he has concluded with 'Ivri that he will transfer to the Prime Minister's Office in three months — when he completes his term in office as director general of the Defense Ministry.

Mordekhay believes there is no room for a National Security Council similar to that located in the U.S. White House. He believes that another body with headquarters and broad authority will create redundancies and complicate the decisionmaking process without improving the coordination between the security and intelligence elements. He proposed to somewhat expand the team of the prime minister's military secretary and to establish a narrow security secretariat for liaison and coordination purposes.

'Ivri declared his desire to resign from the Defense Ministry, but acquiesced to Mordekhay's request to stay on for another three months. No candidate has been named to replace him yet, and assuming that a piggyback period will be necessary, the date of 'Ivri's resignation is still unknown.

Netanyahu has still not answered 'Ivri's proposals regarding the structure and authorities of the National Security Council. 'Ivri proposed that the council handle the coordination between the prime minister and the security and intelligence bodies, coordinate the intelligence evaluations, deal with long-term planning and budgeting, and handle interministerial efforts — such as the strategic relations with the United States and the arms control talks.

The proposal calls for the council's maintaining contacts with parallel bodies in other countries. It will operate with a small staff and committees coordinating with the defense and intelligence establishments. 'Ivri has already presented his plans to the heads of the intelligence community.

Israel: Peres Denies Unity Government Talks, Rejects Lebanon First

TA0108182196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Labor Knesset Member Shim'on Peres said the time has come to discuss the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yasin from prison and to take into account additional considerations following the discovery of soldier Ilan Sa'adon's remains. In a lecture at Haifa University, Peres denied that he is holding negotiations on the establishment of a national unity government.

Our correspondent Haviva Roger reports that Mr. Peres rejected the idea of a Lebanon First arrangement and said it is an impractical idea which could lead to a very grave outcome because Syria would look for other ways to harm Israel.

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Jordan: King, Netanyahu Summit Seen as 'Crucial' to Future of Peace

JN0108151596 Amman THE STAR in English 1-7 Aug 96 p 1

[Report by Ahmad Shakir "Special to THE STAR"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A rich agenda is awaiting the Jordanian-Israeli summit that is due to be held this week between His Majesty King Husayn and Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu. He is expected to arrive in Jordan on Monday, the third country he visits since he was elected last May. He had already visited Washington and Egypt.

Few hours before Netanyahu's arrival, King Husayn will be concluding a two-day visit to Damascus to exchange viewpoints with the Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on the stalled peace process and of ways to re-activate the peace negotiations.

Among issues expected to be discussed by King Husayn and Mr. Netanyahu are ways of reviving the peace accords that were previously signed in the fields of water, transport and agriculture. Also on the agenda, are the release of Jordanian prisoners from Israeli jails and the resumption of negotiations with Palestinians to put an end to Israeli violations of building settlements and the delay in the redeployment of its troops in Hebron.

Since the Jordan-Israel peace treaty was approved by 115 votes in the 120-member Knesset, nothing is expected to change on that score. Yet, observers give the summit special importance.

Netanyahu wanted Amman to be the capital of the first Arab country he visits, but official sources said he changed his decision upon the request of the al-Kabariti government.

Jordanian officials say that such a move would have upset Egypt who may have interpreted the visit as a step to push her out of the peace process. Another reason for Netanyahu's delay of the visit was because of King Husayn departure to London for a minor operation.

But on the eve of Netanyah's visit to Amman, many questions are being posed. Is he still adopting a hardline policy which was revealed in Washington? Or has he become more flexible as shown during his visit to Cairo last month?

Dealing with Netanyahu won't be an easy matter as an official source said. Netanyahu refuses to change his position which is based on his "election rhetoric." He claims that he won because his policies are admired by the majority in Israel. In addition to that, he has his coalition partners to consider.

He also claims that his concepts and principles related to peace, Jerusalem and settlements are the cornerstone of the Zionist ideology.

A high-level Jordanian official says that such attitudes won't prevent us from giving him a chance to explain his policy. A dialogue will show whether he is really serious about peace or not.

We can't forget that it is his party, Likud who made peace with Egypt and it is he who started the Madrid and Washington peace talks with the Arabs, the official added. However, we must bear in mind that Likud considers Sinai differently from the Golan Heights and the West Bank. This is because of historical, religious and military considerations, he continued.

Many proposals, expectations and analyses are made regarding Netanyahu's attitude, among them is the "Jordanian option." This is rejected by Jordanians, Palestinians and Arabs. However, Netanyahu may seek to revive such an option.

However, the visit would be primarily, an exploratory one, and Netanyahu won't be likely to press such an issue, because of the backlash it may create.

Analysts suggest that Netanyahu will discuss some points that may carry the basis for the "alternative homeland" but this would be made very diplomatically.

He will praise the Jordanian-Israeli relationship and stress the fact that Jordan forms no danger to Israel.

On a more controversial [issue], Netanyahu is expected to call for a new agreement that cancels the Oslo accords. The Jordanian- Israeli peace treaty might also be subjected to what he calls "amendments", in an attempt to satisfy the policy of Likud.

The Jordanian-Israeli agreement may be taken by Netanyahu as an- outlet for Likud to reject the Palestinian independent state and to increase settlements.

According to expected Israeli proposals adopted by Netanyahu, the idea of a "semi-state" at Gaza will be introduced. As for the West Bank, Israel will be master of the land being administratively linked to Jordan. Netanyahu opposes strongly any attempt to divide Jerusalem.

Although, Netanyahu fully perceives that these proposals are rejected by Jordan which insists on Palestinian rights in self- determination and building their independent state. He is expected to tackle them in an intelligent diplomatic way.

Jordanian politicians and decision-makers are well aware of Israeli intentions and would strongly reject

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them if they seek to hinder a comprehensive peace solution.

Jordan: House Committee Condemns Israeli Ruling on al-Aqsa Mosque

JN3107162196 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab and International Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives expressed its concern and condemnation of the Israeli Supreme Court ruling allowing Jews access to the holy al-Aqsa Mosque to perform prayers there.

In a statement issued today, the committee commended the efforts His Majesty King Husayn has made to defend the sanctity of Jerusalem and holy shrines. It took pride in his majesty's stands and his consistent efforts to protect the Arab identity of Jerusalem, safeguard holy shrines, and shield them from any encroachment.

Jordan: Yemeni Premier Briefs al-Kabariti on Saudi, Eritrean Ties

JN0108153996 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1100 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has received a phone call from his Yemeni counterpart 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Abd-al-Ghani. Discussions dealt with Arab and regional developments as well as issues of bilateral concern. The Yemeni prime minister briefed Mr. al-Kabariti on recent Yemeni-Saudi border discussions as well as latest developments of Yemeni-Eritrean relations.

On his part, the prime minister outlined to Mr. 'Abd-al-Ghani Jordan's continued efforts, led by his majesty the king, to enhance the Arab stance and bridge gaps to maintain the gains of peace and resume negotiations on their tracks.

Jordan: King Husayn To Pay Official Visit to Syria 3 Aug

JN0208084196 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 2 Aug 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — His Majesty King Husayn will pay an official visit to the Syrian Arab Republic tomorrow to hold talks with President Hafiz al-Asad on coordination to resume and advance the peace negotiations. Talks will also deal with security issues and reinforcing relations between the two fraternal countries.

The Jordanian-Syrian meeting comes on the eve of a visit by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to Amman on 5 August, during which he is expected to hold talks with His Majesty King Husayn on ways to resume the negotiations on all tracks.

Political sources said that his majesty the king will voice Jordan's support for all Syrian demands dealing with full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories in return for a comprehensive peace.

The sources added that his majesty the king will also discuss bilateral issues, including security issues, in light of the tangible detente between Damascus and Amman after a meeting between the two leaders on the sidelines of the 22 Jun Cairo summit.

Jordan: Turkey's Ciller To Visit Amman in September

JN0108200696 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti today received Turkish ambassador in Amman, who delivered a letter from Dr. Tansu Ciller, Turkish deputy prime minister and foreign minister, on bolstering bilateral ties and her upcoming visit to Amman.

During Dr. Ciller's visit, discussions will center on means to bolster bilateral relations, recent developments in the Middle East peace process, in addition to regional and international issues of mutual concern. Dr. Ciller is expected to arrive in Amman next month upon the invitation of 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, prime minister and foreign minister. The Turkish Foreign Ministry had issued a statement saying that Dr. Ciller accepted al-Kabariti's invitation to visit Jordan in September.

Jordan and Turkey enjoy ancient, strong, and friendly relations. Turkey believes that Jordan can promote cooperation in the Middle East. Friendship between Jordan and Turkey — which was reinforced through regular political consultations and continuous talks on the highest levels — has contributed to the realization of peace and stability, which the region badly needs. This friendship does not seek to harm any country in the region.

Jordan: 'Political Circles' Cited on Expected Cabinet Reshuffle

JN0108201396 Amman THE STAR in English 1-7 Aug 96 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hamdan al-Hajj "Special to THE STAR"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Less than six months since Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti formed his first government, political, parliamentary and press circles are now whispering loudly about the possibility of Mr. al-Kabariti carrying out a cabinet reshuffle soon.

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Like all government reshuffles in Jordan, nothing is certain until the final minute. But political circles expect the reshuffle to be major with a number of new faces coming in for the first time. One of the names being talked about is that of former Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Ahmad al-Kasasbah, who abstained at the vote of confidence session, a move that brought him closer to Mr. al- Kabariti. He is expected to be offered the Awqaf and Religious Affairs portfolio. Deputy 'Abd Musa al-Nahar is expected to join as minister of public works of minister of youth.

Minister of Higher Education 'Abdallah al-Nusur is expected to be named first deputy prime minister with Minister of Public Works 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali becoming second deputy to al-Kabariti. Both men will probably change ministries as well.

Current Minister of Youth deputy Muhammad al-Dawudiyah is expected to be named minister of education and Dr. Munthir al-Masri, who now runs that ministry, will be given the Ministry of Higher Education.

Observers believe Mr. al-Kabariti will try to down size the 31-minister cabinet by canceling the three posts of ministers of state.

But former Prime Minister and Lower House deputy Tahir al-Masri told THE STAR that he does not believe Mr. al-Kabariti needs to carry out a reshuffle at this time or at least not until the end of the current extraordinary session of Parliament. He said that the government and the people have many other things on their minds.

But recent developments are said to have prepared Mr. al-Kabariti for the reshuffle move. Observers believe the government is facing internal opposition to its intention to end bread subsidies. In particular, two ministers are said to have expressed their objection to all or part of the government plan, namely Minister of Administrative Development Dr. Kamal Nasir and Minister of Agriculture Mustafa Shunaykat.

The cabinet decided Tuesday night to postpone its adoption of the bread subsidies issue and the Lower House is expected to debate government decision and the food supply policy of the Kingdom.

But that is not to say that Mr. al-Kabariti is backing down. He is not expected to change his mind as a result of the fiery speeches some deputies will deliver during the deliberations.

Jordan: Prime Minister Meets With Students Over Tuition Increases

JN3107201696 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 31 Jul 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Upon his arrival at the parliament today, the prime minister attended part of a meeting that brought together House of Representatives Speaker Sa'id Hayil al-Surur and a delegation of students who staged a sit-in outside the parliament to protest increased tuition fees for post-graduate studies. The delegation communicated the attitude of those staging the sit-in and their request that the fees not be increased. Al-Surur promised to examine their views with the competent university authorities in order to promote the interests of all sides and the public interest as well.

The prime minister listened to the delegation's views. He emphasized the importance of cooperation by all to resolve all problems, taking into consideration available means. He added that students must be given the opportunity to pursue their studies in accordance with the available means.

During the meeting, which was attended by several deputies, the participants stressed the need for the concerned parties to examine the issue in order to safeguard the public interest. University tuition fees go to the university budgets, and not to the state treasury.

Jordan: Cabinet Allows Private Sector To Import Wheat, Sugar, Rice

JN0108203096 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The minister of supply decided to allow the private sector to import wheat and its derivatives, sugar, and rice as of today.

In a session held on Tuesday, 30 July, the cabinet decided to remove these foodstuffs from the list of basic foodstuffs and consider them supply commodities.

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Lebanon: Al-Hariri Meets U.S.' Ross in Brussels, Goes to Ireland

NC0108194996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1900 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has emphasized that Lebanon has not been notified of the so-called "Lebanon first" proposal. He noted that all that we hear about this topic is from the newspapers. He pointed out that U.S. interest in the formation of the consultative committee outlined in the April understanding is very clear.

Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the peace process in the Middle East, stressed that his talks with al-Hariri focused on the formation of the consultative group. Ross noted that his country desires to see the negotiations between Lebanon, Syria, and Israel resume. He stressed that Israeli officials are ready to negotiate on the basis of the Madrid Conference.

Al-Hariri and Ross were speaking at a joint news conference after their working lunch at the home of Jihad Murtada, the Lebanese ambassador to Belgium. Afterwards, al-Hariri, his accompanying delegation, and Ross proceeded to the European Commission headquarters and met with a number of EU officials in the presence of Irish envoy (Kim Thombsos) and (Claude Martin), assistant secretary general in the French Foreign Ministry. The talks focused on participation in the reconstruction of Lebanon and formation of the consultative committee.

Al-Hariri and the Lebanese delegation left Brussels this evening for Ireland to meet with Irish officials and discuss bilateral ties and the EU's role in the reconstruction of Lebanon, as Ireland presides the EU's current session.

Lebanon: Sources Comment on al-Hariri-Ross Meeting in Brussels

JN0108122496 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1100 GMT 1 Aug 96

['Abd-al-Hamid al-Yahyawi report from Brussels]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Lebanon-first plan or the Israeli proposal to remove the negotiations with Lebanon from the Syrian track occupied most of the meeting that Dennis Ross, the U.S. Middle East peace coordinator, held with Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri in Brussels this morning.

Informed U.S. sources say that Ross presented to al-Hariri the Lebanon-first proposal which is based on what he called Israel's readiness to withdraw its forces from southern Lebanon after agreement on security arrangements with Tel Aviv, ending the presence of the Lebanese resistance in southern Lebanon, something the European political circles here explained as clear U.S pressure to separate the Lebanese track of negotiations and a complete agreement between Washington and Tel Aviv on establishing a separate peace with Lebanon before the U.S. presidential elections.

Official Lebanese sources very close to al-Hariri described the current U.S.-Israeli proposal as intended to confuse the Lebanese position and spoil the Syrian-Lebanese relationship. They also regarded the proposal as a kind of test balloon aimed at measuring the extent of Lebanese responsiveness and how far the Likud government can circumvent the peace process and the Syrian track.

Lebanon: Israeli Shelling, Attack by 'Resistance Men' Reported

NC0208054196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli acts of aggression against the western al-Biqa' area have been continuing since 0600 [0300 GMT] today. According to correspondents of the NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY in the Hasbayya area, the Israeli occupation forces are bombarding the Jabal al-Dahr heights, Mimis, and the outskirts of Qilya and al-Dallafah. They reported artillery duels between the resistance men and the Israeli forces in the Kawkaba, Zummarayya, and Zaghlah areas and that the enemy is using heavy artillery. The correspondents also said that the resistance men attacked the Kawkaba post, but the losses are not known because of the violent Israeli bombardment of the area.

Lebanon: Hizballah Admits 2 Members Killed 29 Jul

NC0108123596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has announced that two members were killed in south Lebanon last Monday. A statement released by Hizballah noted that a commando unit penetrated the occupied territory yesterday and brought back the bodies of Muhammad Hasan and Nasir Husayn Hawi, who were killed in an operation against the Israeli forces on the Sujud al-Rayhan road on 29 July.

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Syria: Radio Cites Khaddam's Remarks in Paris on Talks With Chirac

JN0108123096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Paris — French President Jacques Chirac received Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam at noon yesterday. Khaddam delivered a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to President Chirac. The talks, held in the presence of French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette, dealt with a number of issues of mutual concern.

Upon leaving the Elysee Palace, Khaddam told reporters: I conveyed a message from His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad to President Jacques Chirac. The message deals with a number of issues of mutual concern. We also exchanged viewpoints regarding these issues. Khaddam asserted that the meeting was held in a friendly atmosphere with a full understanding of all the issues that were discussed.

The vice president expressed happiness and satisfaction with the results of talks and with the positive atmosphere provided by President Chirac. Khaddam said that President Chirac asked him to convey a message to President Hafiz al-Asad. The vice president asserted Syria's desire for France to play an active role in the peace process, noting France's close historical relations with the Arab world and the region. He added that France can and should have an important role. He said that Syria wants France to have a role in the region. He added: We tried to bring about such a role in the past, when we called for an international conference with the participation of France and other European countries.

Answering a question on the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon first, Khaddam said: Neither Lebanon nor Syria will fall in a new Israeli trap, because such traps adversely harm the Arab side and help the Israeli side make big gains. Khaddam added: There is active coordination between Damascus and Cairo. All the Arab countries adhere to the resolutions of the Arab summit. We all work within the framework of these resolutions.

Responding to a question on the possibility of resuming the Syrian-Israeli negotiations, Khaddam said: When the circumstances become appropriate—that is, when the Israeli side accepts the terms of reference of peace, the Security Council's resolutions, and the principle of withdrawal from the occupied lands—the negotiations can be resumed. [passage omitted citing French spokeswoman]

Syria: TISHRIN Reviews 'Continued Progress' of Ties to PRC

JN0108095896 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 1 Aug 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an editorial entitled "Syria and China—Strong Relations and Constructive Friendship," the newspaper TISHRIN says that Syria was at the forefront of countries that established diplomatic relations with China. TISHRIN reviews the progress of these relations since 1 August 1956. It notes that China's support for our rights, just demands, and restoration of our land greatly contributed to strengthening friendship between the two countries' peoples and bolstering constructive cooperation based on mutual respect and benefit.

TISHRIN adds: Within this context, Syria highly values China's support for our struggle to liberate the Arab lands occupied by Israel. These just stands give an example of supporting peoples against the occupiers and invaders of their lands in order to end all forms of occupation and all manifestations of injustice and aggression, and enable all peoples to exercise self-determination and regain their lands.

TISHRIN goes on to say: Everyone knows that China firmly supports the current international political efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in our region. Syria highly values China's fair and objective role in the interest of the Arabs' just causes. Syria also appreciates China's policy, which calls for an actual and full implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle, and Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories back to the 4 June 1967 and from southern Lebanon.

TISHRIN pinpoints the continued progress in Syrian-Chinese relations, which opens the horizons for upgrading cooperation between the two peoples in all fields and boosts confidence in the two countries' support of each others' causes. It highlights the congratulatory cables exchanged by His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and President Jiang Zemin.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN says: His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad said that relations between our two countries significantly developed in all areas over the past 40 years. Jiang said that relations of friendship and cooperation between our two countries progressed satisfactorily in the political, economic, military, and cultural areas as well as in international affairs, thanks to the two parties' combined efforts.

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Syria: Radio Notes Army Day, Rejects Lebanon-First Concept

JN0108185596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1145 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Syria is today celebrating one of the Arabs' most glorious occasions. It is the 51st anniversary of the Syrian Arab Army, which started as a small force and then became a formidable force that defended Arab territory, as President Hafiz al-Asad said in his message to his soldiers, the soldiers of the Syrian Arab Army, the army of the October war of liberation.

On this occasion, and from a position of pride, strength, and belief in the just peace, President Hafiz al-Asad saw the Syrian Arab Army Day as an opportunity to brief his sons, the soldiers, on the Arab position since they are Arab citizens and the weapon of Syria and the Arab nation to confront all the challenges. Therefore, the president painted a clear picture of the Arab position, which in past years faced many difficulties and Arab conditions brought about by the Zionist ambitions in the Arab territory. Such a case requires the Arabs to achieve the maximum degree of solidarity and to pool all their efforts. This is what President al-Asad and the Arab brothers concentrated on. These efforts were crowned with convening an Arab summit that revived joint Arab action, awakened the Arab nation, and decided to employ the nation's resources to liberate its occupied territories and regain its usurped rights.

On the 51st anniversary of the Syrian Arab Army, the president greeted his soldiers, the soldiers of Syria and the Arabs. He also greeted our steadfast people in the beloved Golan Heights and the steadfast brothers in every Arab land where the Israeli occupation is continuing. He greeted our righteous martyrs, the most glorious and noble among people.

The president joined his sons the soldiers in celebrating this anniversary, the Syrian Arab Army Day, the day of Arab Syria. The president also took this opportunity to address the world public opinion and to indicate the landmarks of the path leading to peace; that is, the path of justice and fairness. He also stated that he who does not follow this path is an enemy of peace. It is very important to provide peace with a framework of right and justice, especially these days in which the extremist right-wing Israeli Government is trying to remove the landmarks of the road to peace. It is also trying to close that road altogether through aggressiveness, expansionism, and racism.

On that path toward peace, President Hafiz al-Asad yesterday sent a message to French President Jacques Chirac which was conveyed by Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam during his visit to the French capital. Khaddam also held talks with the French president on the Middle East peace process, especially following the emergence of a French and European role in this regard; a role which Syria and the Arabs have always welcomed. During these talks, the French president underlined his country's commitment to the land-for-peace formula.

This Syrian Arab activity is based on Syria's fulfillment of its national, pan-Arab, and international responsibility toward the peace process in the midst of a climate of international concern over the peace process. In fact, the seeds of this concern were sown by the former Israeli Government, which froze the peace process in Maryland. However, the extremist arguments of the new Israeli right-wing government threaten to torpedo the peace process.

The most recent negative point in the arguments of the Israeli right-wing government is the Israeli trap that is called Lebanon- first. The Israeli occupation's unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon is decided by Resolution 425. The world is expecting Israel to accept and implement this resolution. Therefore, the attempt to deal separately with Lebanon and drive a wedge in the united Syrian-Lebanese position on the peace process is no more than an exposed maneuver. There is no need to underline that such an attempt is rejected by both Syria and Lebanon.

Syria seeks to achieve peace, which it considers a strategic option. Despite this, everybody should remember that Syria refuses to relinquish a grain of the homeland's soil and that it is impossible to bargain over Israel's complete withdrawal to beyond the 4 June 1967 lines. Everybody should also remember that the security of any one party cannot be achieved at the expense of the other's.

These are the constants of the Syrian position. Based on this, the world acknowledged that Syria truly wants peace and seeks to achieve it. The world, which acknowledged this fact, is worried about the future of the peace process in the light of the Israeli aggressor's determination to keep the fruits of his aggression. Such a stand produces tension, both in the present and the future, in a region which is of concern to the world. It is also a region with the greatest potentials for either the fruits of peace, or the dangers caused by the absence of peace.

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Syria: TISHRIN Urges Arabs 'To Confront' Israel's Expansion

JN0108124696 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0800 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 1 Aug (SANA)—The newspaper TISHRIN says Israel's settlement policy in the occupied Arab territories, including the Golan, aims at destroying the peace process and any chances for a just and comprehensive solution. Consequently, it aims at restoring tension and anxiety to the region and further aggravating and complicating the situation.

In its "Opinion" column under the headline "The Golan and the Settlement Plans," the paper says: Since the government of Netanyahu won the elections, Israeli plans have been channeled in one direction: creating tension in the region in spite of the Israeli officials' contradictory statements. It refers in this regard to the statements made by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi and Internal Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani.

The paper adds that last month Qahalani said that the Israeli Government is ready for an understanding with Syria on the Golan, but he withdrew his remarks under the pressure of the Zionist extremists in compliance with the racist and settlement trend that constitutes the core of the Israeli policy. Qahalani also said that even if Syria is ready for normal relations with Israel, Israel has to wait for at least two generations before it can discuss the issue of withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: This Israeli policy makes it incumbent on the Arabs to confront the challenges and dangers of the Israeli expansion of settlements and destruction of the international peace efforts.

Syria: Press Reviews al-Asad Message to Armed Forces, Peace Stance

JN0208074496 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 2 Aug 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its editorial today, AL-BA'TH comments on our Armed Forces' 51st anniversary. The paper says: Our Syrian Arab Army is surely the army of the entire Arab nation. Since its establishment, the army has taken it upon itself to defend the Arab nation's rights and dignity. The paper notes that after the President Hafiz al-Asad-led glorious Corrective Movement, our Armed Forces witnessed a qualitative transformation thanks to his excellency's generous care. Efforts have focused on modernizing these forces so that they can maintain a high level of constant preparedness to ward off any danger to the homeland or the Arab nation.

AL-BA'TH refers to President Hafiz al-Asad's important message to our valiant forces on their anniversary yesterday. The president said that over the past years we withstood many hardships created by the ambitions of Zionism in the Arab land and aggravated by the countries that supported these ambitions politically and with financial and military assistance. The paper says that President Hafiz al-Asad was extremely clear and to the point when he said: We overcame difficulties and remained steadfast in the harsh circumstances. We have never lost hope, as the faithful and strugglers never come to despair. We have never lost hope as we are the owners of a just cause. We and our nation possess elements of power that nurture hope and optimism in ourselves.

AL-BA'TH says: Leader al-Asad has summed up everything. Yes, we have faced many hardships over the past years as a result of the Zionist ambitions and those who supported those ambitions. However, thanks to the leader's wisdom and piercing vision, we managed to overcome those difficulties which the enemies of the Arab nation tried to plant on our path. Everyone is now aware that the objective of the Arab nation's enemies is to confuse Syria and push it to abandon its principled, constant stands on the peace process. Syria stressed and continues to stress its commitment to that process in accordance with its basic terms of reference on the basis of the resolutions of the international legitimacy and the land-for- peace principle.

AL-THAWRAH's commentaries today deal with the peace process. It stresses that Syria's peace policy is known and has been public for a long time. This stand proceeds from Syria's national and pan-Arab constants regarding the liberation of the entire occupied Arab soil in the Golan and southern Lebanon and the restoration of the Palestinian Arab people's national legitimate rights. It is a stand whose bases and objectives, represented by the achievement of a just, comprehensive peace, agree with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the U.S. land-for-peace principle, on the basis of which the peace process was launched in Madrid.

The paper says: This stand was reiterated by President Hafiz al- Asad in his yesterday's guiding message to our Armed Forces on the Army Day. He reiterated Syria's determination to seek a just, comprehensive peace that ends the aggression, removes the occupation, and gives rights to their owners. He explained that Syria's search for peace is sincere and honest.

AL-THAWRAH adds: It has become obvious to the world that while Syria is seriously and sincerely working to keep the paths of peace open, Israel is working to close them, as shown by the Netanyahu government's

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program and Netanyahu's declared positions, which advocate aggression, occupation, and settlement activity and violate the bases and principles of a just peace. The paper stresses that Syria and the Arab nation believe in and seriously seek to achieve a just, comprehensive peace built on the Madrid formula. This is what the expanded Arab summit in Cairo stressed.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: As President al-Asad said: We are as determined as ever to liberate all the occupied territories to arrive at a just, comprehensive peace in our region.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH refers to leader al-Asad's assertion in his comprehensive pan-Arab address to our valiant forces on their anniversary yesterday that we have a fair case and that despair will not find its way onto our soil. He added that anyone in the world, particularly those connected with the peace process, will be wrong if he thinks that the policy of seeking a just and comprehensive peace that puts an end to aggression, removes occupation, and gives rights to their owners might mean that we have relinquished our constants.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Government Forces Accept Militia Retreat in Jawzjan

LD0108173996 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Attacks by the militia against the positions of the Mojahedin in some areas of the Jowzjan Province were completely foiled. They lost two tanks and an antiair defense system.

Reports received by BAKHTAR indicate that a heavy offensive by the militia forces, which began last week against the positions of the Islamic Army forces in the district of Kohestanat, Sar-e Pol Province, and in the district of Sangcharak, Jowzjan Province, has now been totally defeated due to the resistance shown by the Mojahedin.

This morning, Islamic Army forces attacked militia positions with heavy shells while they were retreating. This resulted in the destruction of two tanks and an antiair defense system. The aggressors have lost their combat morale and are fleeing.

The report adds that the militia, in retaliation for their repeated defeats, savagely bombed residential areas in Auqaf [as heard] today. Several homes were destroyed in the attack, but there is no report yet on the number of casualties.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh: Army Chief Rahman—No More Military Coups

BK3107054296 Hong Kong AFP in English 0535 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DHAKA, July 31 (AFP) — Bangladesh army chief Lieutenant General Muhammad Mahbubur Rahman promised an end to military coups in Bangladesh, a country whose short bloody history includes the assassinations of two leaders during military takeovers.

"No, no there will never be any coup in Bangladesh ... everyone (in the army) wants peace and politicians to run the country," Rahman told AFP Tuesday [30 July], in his first meeting with the press since taking charge May 20.

With a spotless military record, Rahman said the 100,000-strong army wanted to build itself into a disciplined force and concentrate on defending the country, which borders India and Burma.

Gen. Rahman came to prominence following a failed military revolt on May 20 this year. He was appointed army chief by Bangladesh President Abdur Rahman Biswas, after the president fired the previous chief for his involvement in the affair.

In the country's first military coup in 1975, Bangladesh founding father Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was killed along with most of his family members. His daughter, current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed, was abroad at the time.

Former President Ziaur Rahman, husband of former prime minister and current opposition leader Khaleda Zia, was killed in a 1981 coup.

India

India: Gujral Comments on CTBT, Responds to Christopher's Remarks

BK0208115496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1135 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. I.K. Gujral, has categorically stated that there is no question of softening India's position on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, CTBT. Maintaining that New Delhi has been following a responsible and positive approach, Mr. Gujral expressed the hope that concerns expressed by India and other countries would be addressed in the ongoing negotiations to reach a consensus on CTBT. He was replying to queries by members on the issue in the Rajya Sabha today.

Referring to the U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Warren Christopher's reported criticism of India in Washington yesterday, the external affairs minister said it is incorrect to say that India is holding back the progress of the treaty. He reiterated that New Delhi cannot permit any language in the draft treaty imposing any obligation on India, directly or indirectly, to sign the treaty.

India: Report Details Delhi's Condemnation of China's Nuclear Test

BK0108113096 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 1 Aug 96 p 6

[Report by Mahendra Ved]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] For the first time in recent years, India on Wednesday [31 July] condemned the 45th nuclear test conducted by China and noted that after this test, "China may join the other nuclear weapons states in observing a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing."

The Chinese test, conducted last Monday [29 July], was indeed cited as among the "new developments", the other being the resumption of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on the draft Comprehensive

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Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that prompted External Affairs Minister I.K. Gujral to make a suo-moto statement in the Lok Sabha. The statement was entitled "Chinese Nuclear Test and CTBT."

India has, in recent years, refrained from officially commenting on successive nuclear tests conducted by China. It had done so even when a test was announced on the morning the then President R. Venkataraman, arrived in Beijing on a state visit in 1992.

Wednesday's criticism would seem to end what Sujit Dutta, China scholar at the institute of Defence Studies and Analysis (IDSA) called "diplomatic diffidence" displayed by New Delhi to ensure that "bilateral diplomatic vibes remain tranquil."

Terming the "silence" so far as "inexplicable", Dutta said: "If India does not comment officially, the message for the world community which takes note of these tests is that India does not articulate its threat perceptions because it does not perceive them."

Linking today's criticism to both the Geneva talks and the Sino-Indian bilateral relations. Mr Sreedhar, also of the IDSA, pointed to the absence of any high level visit from China in the last over two years. "It appears China does not want to carry the Sino-Indian dialogue beyond the confidence building measures (CBMs) and India has decided to take note of this."

India and China have ignored each other's stand on the CTBT even though it affects each other directly. During his otherwise cordial meeting in Jakarta last week, that began with a hug, Mr Gujral did not even mention the word CTBT to his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen.

Even the minister's statement, while referring specifically to the latest Chinese nuclear test, took care to express "dismay" at 2047 tests carried out since 1945 by five nuclear weapons states: 1032 by the USA, 715 by Russia, 210 by France, and China and the UK both 45 each.

On the on-going talks on draft CTBT, Mr Gujral said India had been consistent on achieving a nuclear weapon-free world and to ensure that the CTBT bring an end to vertical proliferation. Several nations had appreciated the Indian standpoint while many nonaligned nations had noted that the formulation of "entry into force" in the draft was unprecedented.

Mr Gujral said these countries found it difficult to accept Indian proposal for changes in the draft "because of the rigid position adopted by a small number of countries."

The minister's statement was followed by a lively debate that remained inconclusive. Lt.Gen. (rtd) SDN Tripathi (BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]) said mere "appreciation" was not enough from other countries and India should launch a diplomatic offensive.

There was a consensus favouring the Indian stand taken at Geneva as members said there was "nothing comprehensive about the CTBT," aimed at perpetuating the hold of the nuclear weapons states on their arsenals. Among those who participated were Mr Prithvi Raj Chavan. Mr Mallikarjun (Congress), Mr Jaswant Singh (BJP), Mr Roop Chand Pal (CPM [Communist Party of India (Marxist)]) and Mr Brij Bhushan Tiwari (Samajwadi).

India: Air Force Delegation on 'Goodwill' Visit to Israel

BK0108141696 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 1 Aug 96 p 10

[Report by Avinash Singh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS), some other forms of electronic counter measures (ECMs), electronic counter counter measures (ECCMs), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and a second look on the avionics, to be put on upgraded MiG-21 BIs are on the agenda of Air Chief Marshal S. K. Sareen when he starts his week-long goodwill visit of Israel today. The IAF [Indian Air Force] Chief arrived in Tel Aviv last night. He is accompanied by a high-powered delegation of experts from the IAF.

Among other things, the IAF Chief may have a look at some of the latest radar systems in operation in Israel. The visit is in response to the invitation extended by Israeli Chief of Air Staff Maj Gen Eitan Ben Elihau. The previous Air Chief of Israel Maj Gen Herzel Bondinger had come to India in March/April 1995.

The IAF Chief begins his official engagements by calling on President General Ezer Weizman and some of the top functionaries of the Israel Government and the Ministry of Defence. He calls on the Defence Secretary Major Gen David Ivry and the Chief of the General Staff besides his counterpart Gen Elihau "as a goodwill gesture."

His visit to Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) facility assumes importance for any future update of MiG-21 BIs and subsequent variants. It may be recalled that IAI was among the top bidders for the multi-million dollar upgradation contract.

Although it lost to Mikoyan Design Bureau of Russia, the makers of the aircraft, IAF, it got the subcontract from the latter for avionics to be fitted on board the improved fighter aircraft. [sentence as published]

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An avid enthusiast, the IAF Chief has been stressing a lot on modernisation of the IAF and would not mind a second look on what the Israelis are meaning, equipping MiG-21 BIs with avionics.

Avionics apart the Chief of the Air Staff would be keen on knowing as to what Israelis have to offer in terms of electronic warfare measures, as also the ECCMs.

He is scheduled to visit one of the important air bases during his sojourn, where a live display of some such wares may be provided

The Air Force already possesses a few UAVs and has already projected requirement for adding more to its kitty. Since negotiations for buying UAVs for the Indian Army from Israel are already in the final stages, the IAF Chiefs viewpoint on their performance during the planned display may help Ministry of Defence (MoD) in placing future orders in view of the IAF's needs.

Israel has a number of radar systems to offer and it was in this connection that a delegation representing the Defence Production Wing of that country had visited India in August last year.

India is in need of more such systems in view of installation of three powerful radars in Myanmar [Burma] by China to cover the entire Indian Eastern Coast.

It certainly is a matter of concern and India needs to take steps to counter any exigency arising out of such a move. Interestingly, the IAF Chief had paid a visit to Myanmar in April.

India: Lok Sabha Members Concerned Over U.S. Envoy's Kashmir Visit

BK0208092496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Several members of the Lok Sabha today expressed serious concern on the reported visit of the U.S. ambassador, Mr. Frank Wisner, to Kashmir and his meeting with senior army and civil officials there. Raising the matter during zero hour, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, Congress, demanded a suo moto statement by the government on Mr. Wisner's visit and his engagements. His party colleagues described the U.S. ambassador's visit as an alarming signal as the matter relates to the country's security. Some BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] members complained that the government has been allowing ambassadors and officials belonging to various foreign embassies to Kashmir who are not friendly to India. They demanded a ban on such visits. The parliamentary affairs minister, Mr. Shrikant Jena, assured the agitating members that the government will make a statement on the issue.

India: BJP Prepares Strategy To Win UP Elections

BK3107030796 Varanasi AJ in Hindi 10 Jul 96 p 6

[Article by Desraj Goel: "Bharatiya Janata Party Is Busy Preparing Formula for Victory"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Winning elections in the country's largest state, Uttar Pradesh [UP], is very important for the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP]. It is important because, according to general belief, the party that captures UP can rule all of India. Victory in UP is crucial for the BJP because this state contributed greatly to the party's strong showing in the Lok Sabha elections in 1991 and 1996. UP enabled the BJP to stake its claim to form the government in New Delhi.

It is also essential for the BJP to boost the sagging morale of party workers after its government lost the vote of confidence in the parliament. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] volunteers left no stone unturned to prove the veracity of Advani's boast that nobody could stop the BJP's advance toward the Delhi throne. Frustration among BJP workers has deepened all the more because even Vajpayee's popular image and the softening of their doctrine of Hindu nationalism did not work at all.

It was against this backdrop that the BJP convened its national executive session in Bhopal, which made decisions aimed at promoting its popular base in UP to win the upcoming Legislative Assembly elections in the state. That task has not yet been accomplished, and a discussion on this issue will be resumed at the BJP leadership meeting on 13 July. The BJP leadership wants to avoid the 1993-like situation in which it failed to win an absolute majority, and the Samajwadi Party [SP] and Bahujan Samaj Party alliance formed the government in Uttar Pradesh. Now the BJP must prepare a formula that may help it to win more than half of the total seats in the Legislative Assembly because, based on its experience in parliament, it has abandoned its hope of mobilizing the support of other political parties.

Atal Behari Vajpayee had made a weak and unsuccessful attempt to forge an alliance with the BSP, but it was hard for him to swallow BSP supremo Kanshi Ram's demand that Ms. Mayawati would be made chief minister in the event of a victory and that the BSP should be given adequate seats at the time of seat adjustments between the two parties to ensure this. In this bargaining process, Vajpayee found his hands tied because of former Chief Minister Kalyan Singh's hostility toward Mayawati. Even when Mayawati was installed as the chief minister to dethrone the BJP's main enemy, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Kalyan Singh was opposed to giving support to the BSP council of ministers. Kalyan

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Singh's arrogance was largely responsible for bringing down the Mayawati government.

At the BJP's Bhopal conclave, Kalyan Singh argued that putting up candidates from the low-caste and backward classes will be more beneficial than giving away a majority of seats to the BSP. To substantiate his argument, he pointed out that 11 of the 18 backward class candidates and 14 of the 18 low-caste candidates nominated by the BJP in UP in the recent Lok Sabha elections were elected, and they comprised half of the total seats the BJP won in the state. He also added that any talk about not making him the chief minister again will anger the backward class voters, who will then turn toward Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajwadi Party.

As for the higher castes, Vajpayee's image should be enough. The revival of Hindu fanaticism, which was earlier softened to garner the support of other parties in the parliament, will also please the higher castes and the RSS. The RSS is expected to play a major role in the election campaign.

Advocates of social reconstruction, like Govindacharya and Miss Uma Bharati, supported Kalyan Singh's arguments. The RSS' vast ideological popular base can quickly pave the ground for the victory of Hindu nationalism. In this context, Kalyan Singh's character was compared with Vajpayee's. Vajpayee is a Brahman and has been apologetic on the Ayodhya temple issue, while Kalyan Singh belongs to a lower caste and had even staked his chief ministership to ensure the construction of a temple in place of the mosque in Ayodhya. Even today, the same non-Brahman wants the power to build the temple's walls, so that the remaining part of the program to enforce Hindu nationalism can be implemented. During the course of finalizing a strategy for the UP Legislative Assembly elections, Kalyan Singh proved weightier than Vajpayee.

Atal Behari Vajpayee suffered yet another setback. Last year he quelled the revolt within the Gujarat unit of the BJP by assuring Shankar Singh Vaghela of a fair deal. The Vaghela group was expecting a discussion at the leadership meeting on the report submitted by K.L. Sharma and Keshubhau Thakre on an incident in Gandhinagar in which a minister was stripped. That expectation prompted Vaghela to dismantle the Gujarat Pride [Asmita] Front, which he had formed after the aforementioned incident. Demands for a discussion on the issue were made at Bhopal session, but party President Lal Krishna Advani evaded the discussion by saying: "Why should we scratch old wounds?"

Vaghela followers had expected Kalyan Singh, who is a supporter of backward classes in Uttar Pradesh, to back them, but he sided with the RSS lobby, which is bent on punishing Vaghela and his supporters because they displayed the courage to disobey the RSS. This finally paved the way for concrete action by Advani. Soon after the Bhopal session, Kanshi Ram Rana, who was nominated as Gujarat BJP president by Vaghela, was removed from his post. He was replaced by a person nominated by Keshubhau Patel, but the names of those responsible for the shameful incident in Gandhinagar were not even publicly disclosed, not to mention punishing them. This sends a message to all party members that those disobeying the RSS will be severely punished. This entire development reflects that, in the case of organizational matters, Atal Behari Vajpayee has no say at all. He should rest content with the fact that the party may designate him only to address some crisis at a difficult time.

Except for adopting a strategy on Uttar Pradesh, the Bhopal session of the BJP national executive did not make any concrete decisions on any other issue. It talked, however, of hitting back at the Congress, the Communist parties, and the Janata Dal and stressed the need for efforts to woo the dissidents of regional and national parties in the next parliamentary elections. The BJP hopes parliamentary elections will be held within a year, and that is why it has assigned Vajpayee the task of testing the possibility of bringing these prospective partners into the BJP fold.

India: BJP Growth Seen at Expense of Congress (I)

96AS0031A Calcutta SAPTAHIK BARTAMAN in Bengali 29 Jun 96 pp 9 to 12

[Article by Debashis Bhattacharya: Are CPM and Congress Afraid of BJP in this State?]

[FBIS Translated Text] Where was the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] in this state before and immediately following the [May 1996] election. Forget about the Communist Party of India-Marxist [CPM] or the Congress, even the BJP leaders themselves could not imagine that it would become such an important player so speedily in CPM-controlled West Bengal. It is the Congress which has always contested with the CPM and its' Left Front in the division of votes. That has been the recognized political polarization of this state.

It is not that the BJP had not tried to assert its existence as a third party. It had acquired some support in its favor in the ballot boxes. The chunk of the vote they received [had] belonged to Congress. In spite of this, until the other day BJP was not given any importance in the discussions on the political future of West Bengal.

While considering its performance in elections, we find that the BJP has not won till this day a single Lok Sabha

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[lower house of parliament] or Vidhan Sabha [legislative assembly] seat in West Bengal. While glancing at this election, it will be noticed that seemingly, votes for BJP votes have lessened. In the last election, BJP received about 12 percent of [Bengali] votes, and this time that was reduced in half. Even the more renowned BJP leaders lost to ordinary CPM and Congress candidates.

Confusion can surely arise on the question: why then in such a situation do the CPM and Congress fear the BJP in this state? If they fear the party which has not yet acquired the strength to prove in black and white its political support in the state by winning an election, then it must be believed that the visible calculations do not represent the last word. That is why both the CPM and the Congress are taking stock of their situation, keeping in mind each step of the BJP. At this moment the importance of the BJP lies in national as well as in [Bengal] state politics.

Before judging BJPs advance from the profit and loss angle of the CPM and the Congress, let us see how the BJP wind so speedily entered into West Bengal.

I have already said that even before the election, the BJP was not considered a very big factor here. The view at that time was that they could at best win in one or two assembly seats. In reality, they pulled votes less than the last time and did not win a single seat.

With the BJP turning out as the single largest party at the all-India level and when President Shankar Dayal Sharma first invited BJP leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee to form the government, the people of West Bengal, along with the whole country modified their stance. There is no need to state in detail what the BJP did or said in its 13-day government. Despite knowing that his government would not survive, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, through his information and broadcasting minister Sushma Swaraj, showed live on Doordarshan the 2-day debate on the confidence motion in the Lok Sabha. In addition, millions of Indians watched Prime Minister Vajpayee's farewell speech and that served to shake up both the CPM and the Congress in West Bengal. Immediately following this, hundreds of thousands of people crowded Vajpayees 14 June public meeting at Esplanade East [in Calcutta]. Youths also went there in large number. Everyone was obliged to say in one voice: Really we never expected anything like this!

In short, the situation stands like this: The BJP received less votes than last time in the West Bengal elections, but the events that followed from the formation of the Vajpayee government to its failure moved the tide of public support in favor of the BJP in Bengal.

Many political pundits said that this was cause for panic for the CPM and the Congress and that is why both of them started fearing the BJP. It was for the same reason that Subhash Chakravorty, the arduous organizer and minister of the CPM, said: I was frightened to see the crowd of youths at the Vajpayee meeting. They were supposed to go to the meeting of the Students Federation of India, instead they went to listen the BJP leader's speech.

Not only the CPM, the Congress as well as several other partners in the United Front said, after noticing the gathering at Vajpayees meeting at Esplanade East, that it would not be proper to look at the BJP as insignificant. The persons, who at their initial reaction, tried to interpret this Vajpayee meeting as just trivial public interest toward the newly resigned prime minister, within a day amended their statement, and called it politically important. Therefore, even though the BJP did not secure any seat in the election, there was undoubtedly a big gain for it in the aftermath of the election.

Now the question is: Who will be harmed at this BJP gain? Whichever party expects more harm, will be proportionately more frightened of the BJP. Will this BJP gain in West Bengal bring equal loss to both the CPM and the Congress? This has to be determined and only then will it be clear which party is more alarmed at the emergence of the BJP in the state.

If we put the election in view, it will be crystal clear that the promotion of the BJP in the state means disaster to the Congress. To look at it even from a routine political angle, the acceptable explanation of the BJP sharing Congress votes is available. The reason for this is very simple. Both the parties are primarily opposed to the CPM and therefore, they predominantly share the vote bank that opposes the Left Front. The net result of it is the division in opposition votes and easy victory for the CPM or the Left Front.

It will be more easily understood if we put in front of us the statistics of the elections in 1991 and 1996. In 1991, the BJP received about 12 percent of the votes. The Congress got 42 seats in the legislative assembly and the BJP none. This time BJP's votes were reduced in half to about 6 percent. The Congress got about double; it increased to 82 seats. This time too, the BJP could not secure even a single seat. All this means that at the rate in which the BJP vote increases or decreases, the number of Congress seats also fluctuates accordingly.

Who benefits? Undoubtedly the CPM. In that case, why should the CPM be frightened of the BJP in this state? The party, which by sharing the votes of the opposition,

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creating convenience to the ruling CPM is in fact a friend, and why should anyone be frightened of a friend?

The Congress got 9 Lok Sabha seats and the remaining 33 have gone to the Left Front. The election analysis says that if the BJP did not share the anti-CPM votes, then Congress could have won 13 more seats. This means that if the number of votes the BJP pulled on its side by remaining in the third place were added to the votes the Congress received, then the Left Front candidates would have been defeated. Among those constituencies where this was true were Dum Dum, Barasat, Diamond Harbor, Mathurapur — all adjacent to Calcutta — and also Raiganj, Darjeeling and so forth in Northern Bengal. If there was no BJP, then the Congress would have probably secured those 13 seats. As a result, out of 42 Lok Sabha seats, the figure of the Congress would have gone up to 22 and the Left Front would have dropped to 20. Even after this, should we say that the BJP is a thing of terror to the CPM?

It should not be forgotten that in the sphere of tussle with an all-India ruling party like the Congress there is no deviation in the objective of the CPM and the BJP. Both of them want to convert the Congress to a microscopic minority, so that it can never come back again to the condition of ruling the nation. However emphatically the CPM might claim itself as an all-India party, in reality it is today a regional party. Its size is bigger in West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala, but in other states it remains barely extant. Therefore, it cannot be a competitor to the BJP at the all-India level. In that case besides theoretical opposition with the BJP, why there should be any real contest with it in the marketing of votes? As the BJP is not in a position to capture power in West Bengal, the CPM similarly also does not possess strength to battle the BJP for Delhi. Rather, the common target for both of them is to restrain the Congress.

It is exactly for that reason the CPM wishes the BJP to grow up as an anti-Left Front force in West Bengal. That is why the big crowd at the Vajpayee meeting in Esplanade East has made the CPM mentally happy, though it has not verbally expressed it. It would not be acceptable.

As an instance, let me cite here one of the recent statements of CPM Leader and Chief Minister Jyoti Basu. A few days ago he said: "We want the Congress to lose everywhere. I know that the Congress will lose even if an election is held now in Madhya Pradesh. It goes without saying that the two main forces in Madhya Pradesh are the Congress and the BJP. Then who will win, if the Congress is defeated there? It will be the BJP, and that is what Jyoti Basu wants, is it not?

That is why I said that it is the primary wish of both the parties — the BJP and the CPM — to restrain the Congress. In this matter they cannot have any non-cooperation between them. Whatever is visible from outside is only political intrigue. The BJPs obstinate anti-CPM role and its threat to hold militant agitation in West Bengal and so forth are some of the manifestations. These are exactly like the leading role the CPM took in Delhi to topple the Vajpayee government.

Now the question might be raised; why topple the Vajpayee government, then bring in Deve Gowda's government to power with a Janata Dal-CPM-Congress hand shake? Behind this, there lies a deep rooted ploy. The CPM knows that the shaky Deve Gowda government under no circumstances will be able to survive for 5 years. To enter into an alliance now against the BJP gives the means to attract Muslim and minority votes. As the Janata Party remains in power at the center, it will send more candidates to the next elections in the states like Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat and as a result, a large section of the Muslim voters will move toward it. A disruption in the voting in such a manner will finally show that the loss has come to the Congress. Taking a share of the anti-BJP votes, the Janata Party or any one of the United Front will further cause a total ruin of the Congress and the growth of the BJP also in those states. Even if that brings the BJP alone to power, it will at least inevitably assure a disaster for Congress' destiny. That is what CPM's Jyoti Basu, Harkishan Singh, and Surjit and Janata Party's V.P. Singh are silenuy wishing for, because that would not bring any great harm to them.

I do not share the views of those persons who think that if the BJP comes to power it would arrest Jyoti Basu or Laloo Prasad Yadav and send them to jail or banish Chandan Basu [Jyoti Basus son]. The main reason for it is the style with which Atal Bihari Vajpayee has carried out his 13-day prime ministership. After coming to power the BJP never mentioned the things it used to say or the issues it raised in its political slogans, before coming to power. Where were the demands for construction of the Ram Temple, for a repeal of article 370, and pressure for the implementation of similar code of civil procedures? At that time the BJP was thoroughly restrained — an absolute realist and open-hearted party. In fact they know that whatever one can say before coming to power, cannot be whimsically uttered after installation to power because of constitutional, administrative and security reasons.

If any one talks about political interests, then I will ask why did not Vajpayee ask for the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] files with the same enthusiasm on the scandals of Laloo Prasad Yadav as he did on

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Narasimha Rao immediately after assuming the position of the prime minister? I will say it once again that the objective of both sides was the same and that was basically to crush the Congress. To make those crafty steps one hundred percent sure, they are implementing them in their own way.

The mutual rivalry between the CPM and the BJP in West Bengal is also a part of that scheme. Therefore, there is no reason for the CPM to be alarmed of the BJPs growth in this state. The Congress will always some votes in the state, and what is the harm if the BJP also shares some votes with it?

If they understood, then perhaps the Congress would be truly frightened. But he who is insensitive cannot have any feeling. Therefore, a section of the Congress, who have no worry themselves, are strengthening their own resources by compromising with the CPM. Another section, through their own deeds are widening the road for the growth of the BJP.UNCLAS 5R/LD

India: Court Rejects Rao Appeal To Defer Cheating Case Trial

BK0208123096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Delhi Chief Metropolitan Magistrate [CMM] has rejected a plea of former prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, to defer the trial in the Lakhubhai Pathak cheating case till the disposal of a special leave petition by the Supreme Court.

Mr. Rao's counsel contended that, since the hearing of Mr. Rao's special leave petition has been fixed on 12 August by the apex court, the trial in the case may be deferred till the final disposal of the petition. While rejecting the plea in his order, the CMM, Mr. Prem Kumar, said the Supreme Court has not issued any order for stay of the trial. The CMM fixed 17 August for argument on the charge and reserved his order for tomorrow on the bail application of Chandraswami and his aide Kailash Nath Agarwal, alias Mamaji.

India: BJP Said Ready To Win Over Bengal

96AS0031C Calcutta SAPTAHIK BARTAMAN in Bengali 29 Jun 96 pp 16 to 17

[Article by Atun Bhattacharya: BJP Is Gearing Up to Win Over the Minds of Bengalis]

[FBIS Translated Text] The well-established politicians of West Bengal have practically forgotten the great revolutionary, Sri Aurobindo Ghose. To the Bengali politicians, the celebration of birthdays of Lenin, Marx, Stalin, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi have become big political events. How many Bengali people remember the birthday of Aurobindo which falls on Independence Day 15 August? The number can be counted on one's fingers. Such a negligence to a great scholar and thinker like Aurobindo Ghose should surely hurt the sentiments of the middle class Bengalis and the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] and the Sangh family wants to institute exactly that prick to them.

That is why the Vishwa Hindu Parishad [World Hindu Council-VHP] has decided to observe a whole year as the 125th birth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo beginning from the next 15 August. The news could be insignificant, but it has immeasurable political importance.

Vishwa Hindu Parishad is not only a partner of the Sangh family, it is also one of the sources of cadre strength for the BJP, which is making an all out effort today or, in other words, plunging whole-heartedly, to increase its strength in West Bengal. It is a fact that the BJP will adopt various party programs for expanding its influence in Jyoti Basu's state. Senior party leaders, including Lal Krishna Advani and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, will also increase their trips to West Bengal. There will be public meetings and training camps for the party workers along with cadre mobilization. In order to win the sentiments of the Bengali middle class, fraternal organizations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Rashtriya Swayemsevak Sangh [RSS] will be put to service. Programs will be drawn with the help of these partner organizations of the Sangh family to uphold the memories of different Bengali thinkers and scholars.

With this, the BJP will get a mighty issue for its propaganda in West Bengal, claiming that the Bengali Communists and the Congress forgot their own thinkers and scholars and thereby dishonored them. Only the BJP can keep alive the cultural heritage of Bengal's great men like Swami Vivekananda, Bankim Chandra and Aurobindo. It was at the pressure of the BJP that the parliament introduced the singing of the song Vande Mataram [I salute thee, Motherland] at its inaugural and concluding sessions. The Communists show real contempt when listening to Bande Mataram. The Congress has characterized the Vande Mataram hymn as slogan of bandits. Does this BJP propaganda carry any significance to the Bengali middle class?

The BJP has taken a decision to observe Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's centenary. Whatever they might say by highlighting the cultural nationalism, they have only one objective behind it and that is a pure political objective; of increasing the popularity of the BJP among the Bengalis. This means to strengthen the BJP vote bank in West Bengal, and there is no ambiguity in it.

The BJP is a political party and being so its first and foremost objective is to capture power, and that too

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at the center. The 1996 election has taught the BJP a lesson, that it wont be ever possible for it to come to power in the center by merely depending on the Hindi speaking belt. The party needs the Eastern region, including West Bengal, and the Southern region with Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. To be a permanent prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee has to increase his utterances on Swami Vivekananda, Netaji Subhash and Sri Aurobindo, he has to also speak on Naikar in Tamil Nadu. This was realized by the BJP, RSS, or in other words, the leadership of the Sangh family, and they are trying this time to move forward in that manner. The BJP will adopt all means to capture the power solely in the next Lok Sabha election .

A part of this big BJP scheme is to expand its influence in West Bengal. The formation of Deve Gowda's United Front government at the center with Congress support and the CPM existing as the principal patron of that government, has served as a blessing in disguise to the BJP. It is a fact that Vajpayees 13-day old government was removed from power, but the CPM-Congress alliance has opened to the BJP all possible avenues to expand its influence in West Bengal. The BJP leadership feel that if they can correctly guide the party and express the views of the Bengali middle class by respecting their sentiments, then there will be an advance for the BJP in West Bengal. The central leaders of the BJP were very much encouraged to see a huge gathering of the people at Vajpayees 14 June meeting in Calcutta.

Vajpayee is now practically a hero to the eyes of a big section of Bengali middle class, youths and intelligentsia and they think that the BJP is the only alternative political party in West Bengal. Such news reached the BJP leaders in Delhi and they were further delighted with it. In its propaganda in West Bengal, the BJP is now trying to adopt one thing as its weapon, and that is by stating that when a Bengali casts his vote to the CPM against the Congress, he has, in fact, voted for the Congress. In short, he has wasted his own vote. Again when another Bengali cast his vote in favor of the Congress, he too has in fact voted for the CPM and, as a result, his vote was also wasted. The reason for it is that after the Congress and CPM became brothers to each other by supporting the Deve Gowda government at the center, there was nothing left to gain by casting votes for these parties. The BJP is now the only alternative.

In the views of Sushma Swaraj, the spokesperson for BJP: "For so long the political polarization in West Bengal was between the Congress and the CPM, but after their mutual understanding, that polarization picture is changing fast. The disgusted anti-CPM people in West Bengal are also angry and disappointed to see the Congress having friendship with the CPM. In fact, those angry and disappointed Bengalis crowded the last 14 June Vajpayee meeting in Calcutta. The BJP now wants to change this anti-CPM anger, disappointment with the Congress and sympathies and support for the BJP and Vajpayee, into the shape of votes." Without any doubt this statement of Sushma Swaraj is important because it has been due to its political polarization with the Congress that the CPM has survived in West Bengal. The Congress-CPM friendship in politics at the center will definitely influence state politics. Taking advantage of it, the BJP will wish to change the political polarization in West Bengal into the BJP versus the CPM-Congress alliance. If it could place the CPM-Congress in the same row of politics, then the BJP will earn the benefit of being their only alternative in West Bengal. Under this situation it will be bring more profit to the BJP in West Bengal when Anil Biswas and other CPM leaders are largely requesting the Congress to restrain the BJP.

The BJP has both short and long term calculations for increasing its influence in West Bengal. The short term means that the BJP will to try to pull the Congress vote bank as fast as possible in favor of it in West Bengal and for that purpose it will also make efforts to bring a split in the state Congress. However, the BJP leadership will continue to maintain links with different Congress leaders in West Bengal. After capturing the Congress vote bank, a long term BJP struggle will start against the CPM in West Bengal. A power to eradicate a cadre-based CPM lies only with another cadre-based party, and that is the BJP. In order to enter into a long term political struggle against the CPM, the BJP will undertake measures to increase its cadre-based organizations in West Bengal, and only then there will come a big crisis for the CPM.

The youth force is the fundamental strength for any cadre-based party. That is why the CPM leaders were also frightened to see the crowd of youths at the Vajpayee meeting in Calcutta. The faster the BJP can bring this youth force under its cadre-based organizations in West Bengal and organize them at the grassroots level, its influence will also increase proportionately in that rate. It will not be possible to combat the CPM in West Bengal without the grassroots organization. Youth Congress leader Mamata Banerjee does not understand this simple teaching of politics, but the BJP leaders do and there lies the advantage for the BJP in West Bengal. Moreover, issues like the continued influx of Bangladeshis remains as an extra in the hands of the BJP.

Keeping all these things in their mind, the BJP leadership at their national working committee meeting in

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Bhopal in the current week will determine an action plan. They know that there are many things for the CPM and the Congress to lose in West Bengal. In the case of the CPM, it has the fear of losing all its belongings. The BJP has no fear of losing anything, but stands to gain the victory of the whole of West Bengal state.

Iran

Iran: Commentary Views U.S. Failure at G-7 Summit

LD0108204596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Unattributed commentary: "United States Facing Defeat at G-7 Summit"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] European news sources have announced that the United States has been unable to get the agreement of other G-7 member countries to impose embargoes against Libya, Iran, and Cuba. According to these reports France, while clearly opposing the U.S. Helms-Burton Law, recalled the opposition views of the European Union in this domain and Japan brought the legality of the Helms-Burton law under question. The G-7 Summit was held in Paris after the crash of the passenger plane, known as the TWB [? TW 800] plane, with an invitation of France to probe the possible ways of confronting terrorism.

Meanwhile, the explosion of a bomb in Atlanta, the place of holding the Olympic games, gave hope to Washington that its legislations would be accepted by the other G-7 member countries in the Paris talks because the explosion of the bomb occurred in Atalanta while all the world was focusing on this city. Therefore, according to the White House, this incident would influence the public opinion psychologically which could aid the United States to reach its goals. However, the expectations of the White House from the G-7 Summit was not fulfilled and the American representatives returned empty handed. The issue of the imposing of U.S. embargoes against the countries opposing the White House policies did not even have a chance to be legislated. Meanwhile, the G-7 Summit finally issued a statement in which the technica and political cooperation to struggle against terrorism was stressed. According to political experts, the White House did not manage to gain anything from these developments in meetings.

Meanwhile, the European Union issued the retaliatory legislation against the Helms-Burton Law of the United States. Although this legislation of the European Union is just for Cuba but it is so flexible that, if ratified, it will cover the similar American law issued by Clinton on the punishment of the commercial partners of Iran and Libya.

On the other hand, the Voice of America reported the Republicans have refused the invitation of Clinton to cover the ways of confrontation against terrorism and give more authority to the president. Therefore, the creation of disagreements between the president and the Republicans in America on the antiterrorist laws in this country is considered to be another failure for the White House. With this elaboration, we realize that the officials of the White House intended to propaganda by this means on the verge of the elections. However, the opposition of other countries to the U.S. imposed embargoes and the lack of support of the Republicans for the president in the domestic issues has made Clinton's efforts have an adverse effect.

Iran: Radio Commentary Blames Presence of U.S. Troops for Tension

LD0108221396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2000 GMT 1 Aug 96

[Unattributed commentary: "Danger of Foreign Presence in the Persian Gulf]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of War [as heard], William Perry, who was in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia for two days, has said that U.S. troops are unyielding but has gone on to add that 4,000 of the U.S. Forces in Saudi Arabia to prevent events such as the one in Dharan, are to be moved.

In a recent meeting with the U.S. Senate Armed Forces Committee, Perry had to defend his policies, answer many criticisms about the failure of the U.S. War Ministry [as heard] in providing security for U.S. troops, speak of the power of opposing groups, and even had to acknowledge the possibility of other attacks.

He rationalized the presence of U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf by referring to notions such as defending vital U.S. interests and controlling strategic regions.

Meanwhile, opposition to the presence of U.S. Forces is on the increase in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and many people think that the presence of these forces is the cause of tension and insecurity in the region.

But while visiting these two countries, Perry tried to rationalize that presence and even resorted to unfounded claims about what he described as threats from Iraq and Iran.

However, most political experts in the region believe that Iraq is no longer a military threat to the region because its military institutions have been destroyed and because restrictions have been imposed on it.

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They also believe that Iran supports peace and stability in the Persian Gulf and is not a threat to the region but a powerful element contributing to regional security.

It is obvious then, that the presence of foreign forces in the region is the source of tension and that the regional countries must understand this reality and must try to resolve this problem.

Iran: Editorial Condemns Atlanta Bombing

NC0208112496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 28 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "The Tragedy in Atlanta: The Olympic Spirit Will Triumph"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Yesterday a bomb went off in Atlanta's Centennial Park where the 26th Olympic Games are being held, resulting in the death of at least two and injuries to about 110 people who were there to watch one of the most spectacular events in the world.

Spectators had premonitions notwithstanding the Atlanta mayor's assurance that the security being provided is one of the tightest in the history of the games. Our hearts go out for the victims and we condemn the cowardly act as unjustifiable under any circumstance, whoever may have caused it.

Terrorists who target the Olympic Games to accomplish certain ends follow no rules of civilized behavior and are as savage as unthinking beasts. The Olympics has become a universal symbol of peace and brotherhood among nations, where skill and stamina are tested to the utmost. The Olympic standard of scoring, always displayed prominently in the centennial games, attests to the solemnity of its purpose: "When the Great Scorer writes down the score, he writes not win or loss but how you played the game."

The event, which brings young people from almost all walks of life — irrespective of color, creed, nationality or financial standing, friend or foe — in fair competition, draws nations closer to each other.

In fact, the Olympic Games are a series of competitive sports events participated in by amateur athletes representing almost all nations, big or small, and governed only by the rules of fair play and highest forms of sportsmanship. In short, it is no place for pursuing political ends.

The games, first held in Mt. Olympus in Greece, are now observed every four years and conducted under special rules and regulations formulated by an international governing body acting in cooperation with international sports federations and national committees.

Whatever was the motive behind the bomb blast, the act is totally unjustified and the culprit should be brought to justice. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) which was organized to supervise the games is self-perpetuating and is supposed to have a built-in guarantee of impartiality. The members do not represent their respective countries or sports organizations and, therefore, their governments do not have a say in their election.

Thus, any dastardly act taken to jeopardize the games, such as that which occurred yesterday, can be likened to piracy — a crime against humanity and the entire community of nations. The culprit should be arrested, tried and meted the punishment that he rightly deserves — death. Leniency has no place where the crime is of such a stature. It can only be a breeding ground for recidivism.

Now is the time to test the resolve of nations to put an end to international terrorism. We are sure the spirit of Olympic will triumph.

Iran: Usubov — Border With Azerbaijan One of Friendship

LD0108163196 Tehran IRNA in English 1300 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, 1 Aug, IRNA — "Iran-Azerbaijan border is the border of friendship and cooperation, with no place for terrorist groups engaged in activities against either country," the visiting Interior Minister of Azerbaijan Ramil Usubov said here on Thursday [1 August].

Talking to reporters at Tabriz Airport, the Azeri minister also denied rumors that groups opposed to the Islamic Republic of Iran are active on Azeri soil.

With restoration of stability and security in the Republic of Azerbaijan, complete security has been provided for foreigners in the republic, including Iranians, the official added.

He said that several professional criminal gangs have recently been identified and busted in the Azerbaijan Republic.

Usubov termed as very fruitful the agreements he has signed with senior Iranian officials on campaign against narcotics, crimes, and smuggling of medical and chemical materials, during his visit to the Islamic Republic. The Azeri minister said that the agreements reached between the two countries are steps towards consolidation of peace and friendship between the two friendly countries.

Usubov and his politico-security delegation are to leave for Baku on Friday [2 August].

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Iran: Commentary Views Velayati Visit to Belarus With Favor

LD0108222096 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Minister ['Ali Akbar] Velayati, arrived in Minsk, capital of the Republic of Belarus, on Wednesday July 31. After his arrival, Velayati met with the Belarus President, Alyaksandr Lukashenka, and submitted the written message of the Islamic Republic of Iran's President, [Akbar] Hashemi-Rafsanjani.

This is the first visit of the Iranian foreign minister to Belarus and the trip is said to be aimed at expanding political ties, continuation of consultations, creating suitable political situations for expansion of cooperations in the economic and trade fields and further cooperation in regional and international scenes.

According to political experts, the visit of Velayati to Belarus can be evaluated within the framework of expansion of the Islamic Republic of Iran's cooperations with the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. Previously, too, the visit of the two countries' officials, including the visit of the Belarus Prime Minister Mikhail Chygir, to Tehran in March 1995 as well as the first vice president of the Islamic Republic of Iran [Hasan] Habibi's visit in July of the same year, provided grounds for further expansion of the two countries' ties.

At present too, during the visit of Velayati to Belarus and talks of the two countries' officials, practical ways on creating necessary grounds for hastening the performance of agreements and letters of understanding, which have previously been inked by the two countries' officials, will be discussed. Tehran and Minsk have always stressed the expansion of cooperations, especially from the economic dimension. A round of sessions of the joint economic commission of the two countries have been held up to date and a second session is to be shortly held.

Based on latest statistics released by the Iranian minister of commerce in mid-May 1996, the volume of the two countries' exchanges is $8 million, which is evaluated as suitable, regarding the relatively new relations of the two countries. However, regardless of the continuous efforts of Iran for establishment of ties based on mutual understanding, trust and cooperation with regional countries and neighbouring republics, Tehran's close ties with the government of the newly independent states of mid-Asia and Caucasia, regarding the geographic strategic character of Iran, can have an extremely important role in mutual ties as well as regional connections.

Tehran-Minsk cooperations can also further expand within the framework of the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] and CIS regional organizations regarding Iran's membership in the ECO and Belarus in the CIS. As a whole, one can say that the Republic of Belarus has well proceeded from many aspects, such as steel, paper and electricity. And regarding the Islamic Republic of Iran's geographical capabilities, exchange of information regarding the two sides' capabilities and facilities, will have a significant role in hastening the expansion of ties between these two countries.

Iran: Paper Sees Iran-Qatar Relations as Persian Gulf Model

LD0108114296 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 25 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial: "Realism in the Persian Gulf"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Qatari Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jabr Al Thani Tuesday [23 July] arrived in Tehran at the head of a delegation to discuss bilateral relations and regional and international issues with Iranian officials.

Among Iran's southern neighbours, Qatar and Oman have proven that they can independently formulate and regulate their relations with Iran without being influenced by Saudi Arabian or American policies.

Through this policy of self-reliance, Qatar and Oman have been able to make their bilateral relations with Iran firm and stable with rosy prospects for growth and promotion.

In line with this strategy, the Iranian government has constantly expressed readiness to enhance and upgrade mutual relations within the framework of good neighbourly ties and respect for mutual interests, provided that its southern neighbours abstain from political ballyhoo.

Within this framework, Iran-Qatar relations can serve as an apt role model for other Persian Gulf littoral states which could then embark upon detente and betterment of ties with the Islamic Republic.

The adoption of a realistic and independent policy is, therefore, of paramount importance for all Persian Gulf littoral states.

Pitifully, at times, Iran's southern neighbours have displayed some contradictory behaviours in the bilateral relations with Iran.

This contradiction arises when these countries get together at the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC).

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There they seem to adopt a collectively illogical and hostile defensive stance against Iran.

They connive at all national and regional interests of cooperation with Iran and resort to unrealistic behaviour. They even raise issues that cause indignation and annoyance, thus deflating the spirit of cooperation in the Persian Gulf.

If the littoral states succeed in basing their diplomacy on mutual understanding of national and regional interests aloof from US hostile policies, the Persian Gulf can become a peaceful region for all countries bordering it.

This ideal is not far-fetched.

Iran: Rafsanjani Underlines Importance of Unity for Muslim World

LD0108163296 Tehran IRNA in English 1241 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Aug. 1, IRNA — The 9th international unity conference opened here Thursday [1 August] with a message delivered by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani to 160 religious and political figures from Muslim countries the world over.

In his speech, President Rafsanjani underlined that the world assembly for proximity of Islamic sects had a sacred goal and that based on the Holy Koran and the traditions of Prophet Mohammad(s) [peace be upon him], all Muslims were duty bound to endeavor for unity.

Bringing about unity and forming a global government under which all human beings could live under a single flag and a single religion, was among the beliefs of the Islamic worlds he said.

The president said in the world of Islam it is more practical to achieve unanimity in views and form alliances in tactical work. But of course; he added, in view of the multiplicity of views, difference of opinions might naturally arise.

Todays which is the age of telecommunications and many people think logically, there existed ways of ironing up such differences which of course required labor and investments [sentence as received]. Religious dignitaries and Muslim ulema shoulder a grave responsibility in this regard, the president said.

"A golden opportunity for the Muslim world was sacrificed in the Sinai Desert and the Camp David Accord was a stab to the back of the Muslim world" the president said.

Rafsanjani said that the Bosnian issue had offered another chance for the Muslim world to get united, adding "though Muslims In Bosnia were given few concessions we should be vigilant because danger does exist."

Elsewhere in his remarks, president said that the unity week is a week for safe-guarding the achievements of Islamic unity.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, founded by such a great religious personality as Imam Khomeyni is a great bastion and another exceptional chance for the Muslim world, he said.

[Words indistinct] in light of the rule of the religion over the country. The Islamic Republic of Iran is strong in the political domain as well, rejecting any kind of bullying, the president said.

Iran: Officials Give Account of Nuclear Incident in North

LD0108202996 Tehran IRIB Television Third Program Network in English 1815 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, AEOI, announced that everything was under control at Gilan combined-cycle power plant. Following reports of radiation there, there has been an interview an hour ago with Dr. Asjodi, a senior official of the AEOI.

[Begin Asjodi recording] On 24 July, a week ago, there was an accident in the state of Gilan [Gilan Province], in the city of Rasht in a fossil power plant, in which a worker was over-exposed to gamma radiation. The source is usually used for radiographical purposes in the detection of defects in the welding of constructing material. The reason for overexposure, as it is reported, was negligence, and the source was found after a couple of hours.

The level of radiation, according to Atomic Energy Agency, or rather International Atomic Energy Agency, was of level two and this worker is now under medical treatment. There were no people and no workers whatsoever involved in this incident and our medical records and reports from their blood test actually and, and indeed, verify this. [end recording]

Iran: Commentary on Ministerial Meeting on Terrorism

LD3107223496 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2000 GMT 31 Jul 96

[Station commentary: "Terrorism Under Pretext of Fighting Terrorism"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The meeting by the foreign ministers of seven industrialized countries in Paris, which aimed at discussing the ways and means of

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fighting international terrorism, failed to reach expected results except for the technical aspects of fighting terrorism. Officials from the countries taking part in the Paris session adopted measures for ending the wave of terror and violence whose latest effects were manifested in the recent explosions in America, including the TWA airliner and bomb explosion in the Atlanta Olympic park.

Contrary to the past, nowadays the leaders of powerful states in the world have realized, with surprise and consternation, that terror in their countries has domestic roots and stems from the particular political, economic, and social life in those countries. With the ending of the Cold War, terrorism proliferated throughout the world in an unprecedented way. During the new era, terrorism is nothing but a consequence of efforts made by Western counties, in particular the United States, made especially to suppress and break the will of the independent and free nations. The support given by America for terrorist acts in any country whose life-style and values of its people did not coincide with the wishes and interests of the White House, took on the form of an accepted principle in U.S. foreign policy. Following that path, all types of overt and covert support were given to terrorists who were attacking the life and property of the people and national personalities of the Third World.

In recent years, America has become a safe haven for terrorists, kidnappers, and criminals who have violated human rights in revolutionary and independent countries. That has now brought its unpleasant results for White House leaders. Now it has become clear to all that ignoring the roots of terrorism results in its increased growth and the only way to be rid of this global problem is to embark on a concerted, continuous, and logical campaign against this ominous phenomenon.

Iran: NIDC Involved in Projects in Libya, Azerbaijan, Senegal

LD3107212496 Tehran IRNA in English 1317 GMT 31 Jul 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, July 31, IRNA — National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC) has saved dlrs. 1.5 billion for the country so far by achieving self-sufficiency in manufacture, repair and maintenance of its equipment and carrying out digging operations since 1989.

Managing director of the company Mohammad-Javad Asemipur said here Wednesday [31 July] that since the start of the first five-year plan, the NIDC has dug 467 wells and repaired 200 wells. The Iranian official said that Iran was 96 percent self-sufficient in manufacture, repair, and maintenance of on-shore drilling equipment. The NIDC is ready to export its technical and engineering services, he said.

Asemipur said the company launched 86 sampling operations in the year 1372 (March 21, 1993-March 20, 1994), 116 in 1373 (March 21, 1994-March 20, 1995) and 200 in 1374 (March 21, 1995-March 19, 1996). It expected to do 220 sampling operations by the year end on March 20, 1997, he added. He said the by carrying out such operations, the company saved dlrs. 25 million for the country.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Asemipur said that his company has signed rls. 80 billion worth of contracts with Iranian contractors since the triumph of the Islamic revolution in 1979 in order to foil impacts of U.S.-imposed economic sanctions and encourage domestic manufacturers to make components needed by the oil industry.

The NIDC has set up a joint company with Libya and the machinery needed by the joint company has been manufactured by the Iranian ground forces and are ready to be exported to Libya. Moreover, he said, the Iranian company has signed a contract with Senegal for exploratory and digging operations and another with Azerbaijan for establishment of a joint digging company with the republic.

The National Iranian Digging Company was established in 1979 upon the order of father of the Islamic revolution the late Imam Khomeyni to replace 46 foreign companies which were then operating in the country.

Iran: Paper Honors Memory of Operation Ambuscade in 1988

LD0108200796 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 25 Jul 96 p 11

[Interview with Dr. Esma'il Mansuri-Larijani on Operation Ambuscade by unidentified RESALAT correspondent; date, place not given: "The Monafeqin Invasion Was Suicidal"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] We are on the threshold of the [anniversary of the] glorious Operation Ambuscade [Mersad — at end of Iran-Iraq war in 1988]. In this operation the popular nature of the holy ruling system of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian nation's aversion towards the despicable traitors, and the defeat of the treacherous Monafeqin [Hypocrites] mini-group were made quite clear to the world and once again demonstrated the combat strength of the infidel-fighting Islamic force in combating any form of conspiracy by the [global] arrogance.

To honor the memory of that proud operation we have conducted an interview with the deputy head of the

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Foundation for the Preservation of the Evidence and Values of the Holy Defense [in the Iran-Iraq war], Dr Esma'il Mansuri-Larijani who was directly involved in that operation. Here is our interview.

[passage omitted]

[RESALAT] Based on what analysis did the Hypocrites embark on the invasion?

[Larijani] The Hypocrites' analysis was raw and blind. On the basis of incorrect and unrealistic reports about the conditions inside Iran, the situation on the fronts, and the status of the forces of Islam after accepting [UN Security Council] Resolution 598 and, after consultations with Western espionage organizations, including the American's, and by relying on raw and incorrect information, they embarked on the invasion of our country. Military experts believe that move by the Hypocrites was tantamount to suicide and that the operation did not conform to any military strategy or principle. For them to move a column of their vehicles along the main road and commence their advance with that column was sheer stupidity.

Undoubtedly the concept of the Hypocrites organization is based on deception and fantasy. They themselves, have been deceived and they also resort to deceit when dealing with others. In the first instance the Hypocrites were deceived by the leaders of their own organization. According to documents and statements discovered during Operation Ambuscade it came to light that the leaders of the organization had instilled two points in the minds of the members. One was that every one of them could take on 10 of the forces of Islam. The second was that the people in every town were waiting for their arrival and would support them. Based on those wrong assumptions they did did not think that there was even a 1 percent possibility of failure. Therefore, when their invasion encountered resistance from the forces of Islam, it was unexpected, as they had not foreseen that they were incapable of reacting. [3/5]

[RESALAT] Please describe the outcome of Operation Ambuscade.

[Larijani] Operation Ambuscade, in addition to proving the defeat of the blind-hearted Hypocrites, had two other significant results for us. First, for the umpteenth time, it demonstrated the will of the Iranian people to stand up to and resist world arrogance. Second, Operation Ambuscade showed Saddam [Husayn] that the Hypocrites, despite their empty propaganda, are no match for the might of the Islamic Republic of Iran and for the Iraqi regime to pin its hopes on that mini-group was utter stupidity.

[RESALAT] Please describe the behavior and crimes of the Hypocrites against the people in occupied areas.

[Larijani] As I have said before, the analysis by the Hypocrites was that the people would welcome their evil presence. But, in reality, when they saw the opposite and encountered resistance from the people of Eslamabad-e Gharb they became very angry and contacted their superiors, who gave orders to kill the people in the occupied areas. In particular, when their forces were smashed in Operation Ambuscade their crimes reached a zenith. When we returned we saw that the Hypocrites had put 20 brother guards in front of a firing squad.

[RESALAT] What is the present importance of the Hypocrites mini-group to Saddam, who still supports them?

[Larijani] Basically, many leaders of the Hypocrites mini-group have also reached the conclusion that any kind of military operation against the mighty Islamic Republic of Iran would be ineffective. Now, a great despondency has affected the remaining people in the mini-group and, to retain the few remaining duped members, its leaders are forced to resort to debauchery and entertainment, such as music and sexual corruption. The uselessness of the mini-group has been proved to Saddam but the Iraqi regime is using the mini-group as a propaganda tool to serve its own interests. Because of his isolation today, Saddam's regime needs support. Therefore, it protects anybody who supports the regime and its actions. [passage omitted]

Iran: Factions Urged To Keep Original Names, Not Use 'Hezbollah'

LD3107221096 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 24 Jul 96 p 2

[Editorial by Editor in Chief Hoseyn Shari'atmadari: "The Unwanted Harm"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On the basis of an approved principle in today's political culture, political groups and factions are allowed to choose their names and titles freely and the leaders and officials of a political party can name their organization on the basis of its tendencies and viewpoints as well as the taste and preference of its members. However, groups and parties that lean and rely on Islam must consider a number of additional factors in the process of selecting a title for their organizations.

One of these fine points is respect for the integrity of other individuals and political groups and tendencies. In other words, the name given to a party should not in any way serve to undermine the image and identity of others, even in an implicit and indirect manner.

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During the first days of the fifth Majles, deputies supported by the Militant Clergy Association [Jame'eh-ye Rowhaniyat-e Mobarez] formed a group and gave it the title of "the Hezbollah of the fifth Majles." Even though this move was an indication of the interest of the deputies in Hezbollah and as such could be seen as a God-seeking measure, nevertheless, given the universality of the concept of Hezbollah on the one hand, and the special definition that this concept has under the existing political circumstances on the other hand, the choice of the said title for this group is not entirely without its problems. Individuals who have chosen this title for their group — albeit with the best of intentions — have unintentionally attacked other individuals and political groupings who are present in the Majles but for various reasons do not share the viewpoints of the Militant Clergy Association. With their choice of this title, therefore, they have implicitly undermined the image and identity of the said individuals and groups.

It might perhaps be said that one is free to choose names and titles, especially when the selection of good and sacred terms is strongly recommended. However, it must be said that the existing political circumstances, together with the way public might interpret things, are factors that need to be borne in mind in the process of selecting names and titles.

For example, choosing the sacred name of 'Abdollah [meaning the servant of God] for a person never means that he alone is the servant of God and others — God forbid — are not Allah's servants! However, when a number of Islamic political groups present on a clearly defined milieu have different viewpoints and tastes, then the allocation of a worthy and sacred title such as "Hezbollah" to a particular group can indirectly imply that other groups and individuals are not Hezbollahis.

This is because Hezbollah is a universal and all-embracing concept and all those who believe in Islam and express obedience to the leader of the revolution have a right to consider themselves as Hezbollahis.

This is particularly salient given that all the esteemed Majles deputies — of course with the exception of the esteemed deputies representing religious minorities — have entered the Majles after declaring their Islamic faith as well as their practical commitment to the principle of velayat-e faqih [guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult]. Therefore, the title of Hezbollah should not be monopolized by a particular group.

Considering the accepted notion that the only aim of citing examples is to shed more light on the subject of debate, perhaps it is useful at this juncture — without, God forbid, any intention of drawing parallels — to refer to a fine point made by the martyred teacher, Morteza Motahhari.

He said that the dispute between the "Asha'ereh" and "Mo'tazeleh" groups [two camps of religious scholars] was not over belief or disbelief in the Islamic Tradition. Nonetheless, in the course of the debate with the "Mo'tazeleh" group, "Asha'ereh" called themselves "the people of Tradition" [ahl-e hadith], implying that the other side, that is the "Mo'tazeleh" camp, did not adhere to the tradition!! This, however, was certainly not the case. Immediately after the formation of the Fifth Majles Hezbollah Group by deputies supporting the Militant Clergy Association, the deputies backed by and supporting the Servants of Construction formed a similar group and chose the name, Hezbollah Forum [Majma'-e Hezbollah]. Although the same criticism applies to both groups, one should not overlook the fact that the action of the deputies supporting the Servants of Construction was a natural reaction to that of the supporters of the Militant Clergy Association, that they did so to remove allegations of not being hezbollahi [members of the party of God] as inferred by the action of the first group.

Yesterday, in an interview with RESALAT newspaper, Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hoseyni, deputy for Tehran and member of the Militant Clergy Association, described the manner of formation of the fifth Majles Hezbollah Group. He said that those participating in the Fifth Majles Hezbollah Group sessions have the honor of being in the holy domain of the supreme jurisconsult and their work and views are based on the instructions of the esteemed leader [Khamene'i]. No doubt he means to emphasize the group's reliance on an invaluable and sacred principle, but the question is: Do the other deputies, who are not in the group because of differences of opinion and who do not take part in its meetings, not have the honor of being in the holy domain of the supreme jurisconsult? And is their work not based on the instructions of the esteemed leader? Finally, it is better for the various factions to stick to their original names and leave the judgement on the extent of their adherence to hezbollah to the public.

Iran: Agriculture Minister—Iran's WTO Membership 'Inevitable'

NC0208113496 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 29 Jul 96 pp 1, 14

[TEHRAN TIMES Service Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN - Iran's joining the World Trade Organization (WTO), formerly known as General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), is

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unavoidable, Agriculture Minister, 'Isa Kalan-tari told the TEHRAN TIMES.

The government is currently examining different aspects of joining the WTO and when a bill on this effect is prepared by the cabinet, it will be sent to the Majles for final approval, which may take some two years.

There are two major trends in Iran: one advocating Iran's membership to the WTO and the other opposing it. The opponents believe that Iran's membership to the WTO would undermine Iran's industrial, agricultural self-reliance.

The advocates state that Iran's membership to the WTO will open up new markets for Iran's agricultural produce.

The main problems in upgrading export of Iran's agricultural produce pertain to marketing and packaging of the goods and timely transportation as well as lack of sufficient skillful manpower to export them, he added.

Exports of agricultural produce is the best kind of non-oil product exports which could be carried out more easily, should there be enough marketing, suitable packaging, rapid transportation and export facilities for the exporters of the agricultural produce, Kalantari stressed.

"We can export surplus of our agricultural produce, including dates, raisins, vegetable, summer crops and fruits", the minister added.

According to Kalantari annual per capita consumption of fruit and vegetable in Iran stands at 250 kilograms which comes up to a total 15 million tons per year. This is while Iran produces 23 million tons of fruit and vegetable annually.

"Should we conclude long term contracts with foreign companies and governments to export fruits and vegetable, we can export a considerable amount of agriculture produce," Kalantari said.

Asked about Iran's self-sufficiency in wheat production, the minister said by the end of the Second Five-Year Development Plan (1995-1999) the country is to yield 14.2 million tons of wheat annually which will meet the domestic need for wheat. Iran's wheat production last year stood at 11.2 million tons, Kalantari said.

Currently Iran imports nearly 3 million tons of wheat annually, he said, adding that there is a great chunk of it almost wasted when baked, due to objectionable baking methods of bread.

Over the past years Iran's dependence on dry farming of wheat was nearly 50 percent, he said, adding that the figure has decreased to 30 percent for the time being and that certain projects are underway to reduce it 20 percent by the end of the Second Five-Year Development Plan.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal: Finance Minister Resigns, Protests Innocence

BK0108163796 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 1 Aug 96

[Correspondent report — Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, July 31 — His Majesty the King has accepted the resignation tendered by Finance Minister Dr Ram Sharan Mahat from his post today.

His Majesty the King has also appointed Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba to look after the affairs of the Finance Ministry.

The Finance Minister tendered his resignation through the Prime Minister on Wednesday [31 July] following persistent pressures from the Opposition. Mahat's possession of account at an American bank, which came to public disclosure recently, had caused furor among opposition members in the parliament.

Dr Mahat, who had been accused by the opposition Communist party CPN-UML [Communist Party of Nepal—United Marxist Leninists] of violating the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, insisted that he had done nothing outside the existing laws. But he said he was "resigning on grounds of morality" so that charges levelled against him may not affect the government. "But I am innocent", he said.

Addressing the House of Representatives meeting, Mahat said there was no provision in the law that would compel him to declare the sum in his account, which he acquired during his services with the United Nations Development Project (UNDP).

"No human being is perfect," he said. "Yet, I was sure that I had not broken any laws of the country knowingly or unknowingly."

He claimed that he had asked for and subsequently acquired the permission from Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to transfer his money from the New York based Chemical Bank to Nepal, days before the issue surfaced.

Refuting the opposition charges of abuse of authority, Dr Mahat said he never put any pressure on the officials of NRB to plant documents and release statements favouring him.

As an employee of UNDP, he once again said he was tax exempted and did not have to pay taxes anywhere

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in the world. He could not close the account as financial matters still had to be settled with his previous employer over claims and counterclaims of overpayment. The time taken to settle the matters is often usual with the employees who have had worked for UNDP, he said.

Dr Mahat added that he would retire from public life if he was proved guilty of violating any laws or doing anything illegal.

Earlier on Thursday [1 August], UML member Krishna Gopal Shrestha had presented photocopies of Mahat's bank statement in the House. The House since then had been stalled for four consequent days over the issue, with members of the UML protesting and demanding Mahat's resignation.

On Tuesday [30 July], opposition MPs even picketed Speaker Ram Chandra Poudyal and chanted slogans demanding the Finance Minister's resignation for over an hour forcing the Speaker to adjourn the meeting. The Houses' regular business resumed peacefully following Mahat's resignation on Wednesday.

Dr Mahat had worked for UNDP from 1988 to 1991, when he quit his job to move to Nepal. He was appointed the vice-chairman of the National Planning Commission. He later won a parliamentary seat from Nuwakot district and became the Finance Minister last year when the present coalition government headed by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba took office.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Rules Out Signing of CTBT Unless India Does

BK0108135296 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said Pakistan has taken a principled stand on the nuclear nonproliferation and declared that we will not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT] unless the document is initialed by India. This just and principled stand has been recognized by the world powers, she said. The prime minister was addressing a public meeting in Pishin today. She said we always insisted that the issue of nuclear nonproliferation must be treated in a regional perspective. India, she said, possesses nuclear capability and initiated aggression against Pakistan on various occasions.

Prime Minister Bhutto, while highlighting the success of her government's foreign policy, reminded that in 1993 when she assumed power Pakistan was on the threshold of being declared as a terrorist state. However, she said, we have succeeded in restoring the tarnished image of the nation and steered the country toward the ranks of civilized and progressive nations.

The prime minister also spelt out various aspects of her government's economic policies, which, she said, are aimed at bringing positive changes in the socioeconomic sector of the country. She regretted that the opposition is following the path of agitation and long marches, hampering the economic and industrial progress.

PTV correspondent reports from Pishin that the prime minister's declaration of 1996 as a year of local bodies, 1997 as a golden jubilee year of Pakistan, and 1998 as the election year was greatly applauded by huge crowd which was present at the public meeting.

The prime minister on the occasion reiterated that the policy of her government to bring more and more amenities to the people at their doorsteps would continue.

And, at the disarmament conference in Geneva, Pakistan made it clear that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty will be imposed only when it has been ratified by all 44 states, including nuclear capable states. Pakistan's Ambassador Munir Akram said Pakistan will not accept any unilateral commitment.

[Begin Akram recording] We will not accept unilateral obligations or commitments. It is for this reason that we attach the highest importance to the provision in the chairman's CTBT text that the treaty will enter into force only once it has been signed and ratified by 44 states, including all the nuclear capable states. If one of these eight states maintains the right to test, so will the other seven. Their security interests are interlocked. They must all come into the treaty. In this sense this treaty is an all or nothing treaty. [end recording]

Pakistan: More on Bhutto's Remarks on Nuclear, Kashmir Issues

BK0108145396 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said her government has successfully carried out the spadework for a complete reorientation of the national economy to put the country on sound economic footing and prosperity. She said the government is making every effort for overall development of Balochistan to remove its backwardness.

Addressing a big gathering at Pishin in Balochistan today, she said the national economy was totally crippled when the PPP [Pakisan People's Party] government took over. But during the last three years, we have attracted investment worth $20 billion and checked the continuous trend of price hike. But she regretted that the strike

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calls, threats of agitation and dharna [sit-in protests] by the opposition was affecting the government's endeavors for a stable economy. She recalled that despite repeated invitations, the opposition parties did not reciprocate to the government's initiatives for a dialogue. She said we believe in the politics of dialogue and want to resolve all the issues through dialogue.

Referring to the Kashmir issue, the prime minister said the manipulated elections in the Indian occupied Kashmir were not the solution of the miseries of the Kashmiri people. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference was the representative body of the Kashmiri people and the government of Pakistan would support its stance. The prime minister said she had written a letter to the newly elected Indian prime minister seeking his cooperation for a political solution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the aspirations of the people of Kashmir.

Referring to the nuclear program, the prime minister announced amidst thunderous applause that Pakistan would not sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty unilaterally. There was lot of pressure to roll back nuclear and missile programs, but her government successfully convinced the international community that for the stability in the region, India should also be asked to comply with these treaties.

She said it is the PPP which granted the right of franchise to the people of the Northern Areas for the first time.

Referring to success of the foreign policy of Pakistan, the prime minister said the Brown Amendment was made despite all Indian efforts to stop it. The first shipment of defense equipment, she said, is now its way to Pakistan from the United States.

Earlier the deputy leader of the opposition in Balochistan assembly, Maulana Abdul Bari, presented the address of welcome and praised the policies of the present government for the development and prosperity of the country. The Balochistan governor, retired, Lieutenant General Imranullah Khan; Chief Minister Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Magsi, elites of the area, and a large number of people were present on the occasion. Radio Pakistan's representative reports from Pishin that despite the transporters strike, a large number of people came to listen to the prime minister at Pishin.

Pakistan Calls For Full Implementation of Dayton Agreement

BK0208052496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 2 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to the cause of Bosnia-Herzegovina and called for full implementation of the Dayton peace agreement. The commitment was reaffirmed by the minister of state, Mr. Raza Rabbani, at the ministerial meeting of the OIC [Organization of the Islamic Conference] Contact Group on Bosnia in Geneva. The minister regretted that war criminals were still at large and right of displaced persons to return to their places has still not been ensured. Mr. Raza Rabbani proposed disbanding the self-proclaimed Republic of (Herze-Bosnia) in the Croatian part of the country which jeopardize the very existence of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He also demanded removal of indicted war criminals from their offices and dispatch them to the Hague to face war criminal charges.

Pakistan: Major Gul Interviewed on Kashmiri Struggle

96AS0032A Lahore ZINDGI in Urdu 20 Jun 96 pp 16-19

[Major Mast Gul Interviewed by ZINDAGI's Ikramul Haq and Mohammed Ishfaq Injam; date and place not given]

[FBIS Translated Text]

[ZINDAGI] Please put some light on the latest situation on the jihad in Kashmir.

[Major Mast Gul] The present situation is not like it was in 1993 and 1994. The momentum we had expected to gain is not there. We hoped that Pakistan [Bhutto's Government] would do something [to help] at the last minute. The rules for a guerrilla war call for, first weakening the enemy from within, and then hitting it hard at the end. The mujaheddin thought that they had made India weak from inside during their three or four years of effort and all that was needed was the final blow. However, no action was taken by Pakistan. The present situation in Kashmir is not very satisfactory. India could not hold the election the way it wanted to because of its fear of the mujaheddin.

[ZINDAGI] How did the mujaheddin foil the drama of election that India had staged in occupied Kashmir?

[Major Mast Gul] The people of occupied Kashmir are all mujahids themselves. They do not want to join India. I have interacted with the Kashmiri people quite closely. I can say that India can stage such election dramas ten times and still will not be able to harm our campaign. It

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does not matter if they establish a government headed by a governor, by a prime minister, by a president or a chief minister, Allah willing, the mujaheddin will never be affected. Allah willing, they will continue working against India regardless of how many election dramas it stages.

[ZINDAGI] You stated that the mujaheddin had hoped Pakistan would help them in the end. What did you mean by this?

[Major Mast Gul] In a guerrilla war, the last moment is when the enemy is weakened from within. The mujaheddin have weakened India from within just like the Mukti Vahini [Bengali Freedom Fighters] in Bengal had weakened our army in Bengal. India then attacked at the right time separating Bengal from us. It had forced our armed forces to submit. The enemy is in a similar predicament in Kashmir now and we can take revenge now. We can make the Indian army surrender. If only our army could have attacked India.

[ZINDAGI] You have given us the example of East Pakistan. That is a different nation and is 1,000 miles from here. Kashmir is geographically linked to India and has the huge Indian army there to defend it. How can Pakistan attack India in such a state?

[Major Mast Gul] Kashmir is not connected to India; it is connected to Pakistan. Kashmir is connected to India via a tunnel. It is connected to Pakistan via a regular road. There are many other routes also as well as the 1,400 km border shared with Pakistan. There is also the well-defined boundary line. The link to India is by a tunnel which is not difficult to close. We can do it by a blast. However, if no one came to help us, the people of Kashmir would have problems getting food and medical drugs. When we are assured that Pakistan will act on behalf of us, the connection with India will be severed that day and India will not be able to do anything about Kashmir.

[ZINDAGI] The government of Pakistan claims that it is ready to help Kashmir at the national, international, or any other level. How far is this correct?

[Major Mast Gul] You have seen what they are doing by making Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan chairman of the Kashmir Committee. If they really want to do something for Kashmir, they should openly announce that they want to separate Kashmir from India just like Vajpayee, Narasimha Rao or any other Indian prime minister repeatedly announce in their foreign policy that they will separate Kashmir from Pakistan and will start a war against Pakistan if necessary. We have no hope from the United Nations. The UN, like other international organizations are controlled by Jews. We should not expect anything from them. If we want to liberate Kashmir, we have to be ready to fight today, tomorrow, next month, or next year. The only solution of this problem is war. If we do not start the war, India will force one on us. Only Allah knows what will happen then.

[ZINDAGI] Are various international Islamic organizations such as the Organization of Islamic Conference and the Rabita-i Alim Islami cooperating with you?

[Major Mast Gul] They are not doing anything. The Rabita-i Alim Islami just makes statements and collects donations or tents for someone. We do not need that kind of help. We need Stinger missiles, tanks, cannons, planes, and helicopters. They should give these to us. We need an open border. They should help us open the border at Sialkot or Gujrat or Wagha or Neelam Valley or Leepa. They should leave these open for us and tell the mujaheddin to lead a full attack. It is fine if the Pakistani army does not join us in the attack. By the grace of Allah we have 30,000 trained mujaheddin there who can use any kind of weapons from Kalashnikovs to tanks and can fly airplanes if necessary. We can take care of India on our own. Other sister organizations, especially Lashkar Taiba and Harkat-ul-Ansar, are equally involved in this jihad with us. Every Pakistani; whether a member of the pakistan People's Party [PPP], the Muslim League [PML], Barelvi, or Al Hadiths; is ready to fight against India. The Pakistani people are above political allegiances when it comes to fighting against India. What are we waiting for if they are all ready?

[ZINDAGI] Major, you said that the present government is not helping you at all. Can you name former governments that have helped you?

[Major Mast Gul] None. As [Jamaat-i-Islami leader] Qazi Hussain Ahmed said, they are both just like two sides of a bad coin. You can see for yourself that all they do is make pronouncements. Nawaz Sharif announced while sitting in America that Benazir is a US agent. Benazir announced in order to make the United States happy that she would crush extremists in Pakistan with an iron hand. We hear this statement twice a week. You tell me; who is she calling extremists? We are Muslims. She calls mujaheddin extremists. She also calls Jamaat-i-Islami [JI] members and those who want to start jihad, extremists. We will actively oppose her.

[ZINDAGI] How many organizations are active in occupied Kashmir?

[Major Mast Gul] Hizbi-Al Mujaheddin is the only militant organization in the Valley. All other organizations combined are not as large. We are trying to have them

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all work together. Mr. Salauddin is our supreme commander in Muzaffarabad. The Hizbi-Al-Mujaheddin has also formed a committee involving all organizations.

[ZINDAGI] Are the jihad organizations fighting among themselves just like the political parties in Pakistan are?

[Major Mast Gul] India has bought off some people in the Valley with money. These people are agents of the Indian Army and are used against the mujaheddin regularly. They have a leader of this group. They call this organization Akhuwani-Al-Muslamun and a known criminal called Kokha Parey is its leader. If members of the Akhuwani-Al-Musalmun refuse to obey, they are eliminated. In one sense, these people are hostages of India. Some people are forced to help them. However, despite this, the mujaheddin are not effected. Now they [Indian army] have military camps established every three kilometers. Despite this difficult situation, the mujaheddin are still living there. Twelve of our associated fighters became martyrs recently.

[ZINDAGI] How do you communicate with each other with all these military camps around?

[Major Mast Gul] We have a regular network there. We have a system in which the Jamaat-i-Islami plays a regular role. We have our people in every village. The Jamaat-i-Islami is making major sacrifices. Its members and supporters are being tortured, killed, and their homes destroyed. The people still support the Jamaat-i-Islami and provide food and information to it. I cannot tell you openly how these people operate. They have formed divisions in four districts and each division has a control room with a large wireless set controlled by the commanders. Our system is so organized that if an incident occurs in Doda, we learn about it in Kapwada at the same time. Doda is 250-300 kilometers away and this is a hilly region.

[ZINDAGI] If the [September, 96] election in Kashmir fails, what will India do next?

[Major Mast Gul] India wants to convince the international media that it treats the local people very nicely and that the locals hate the mujaheddin, want to join India, and have taken part in the election with great zeal. The international media, however, knows that no one participated in the last election. The BBC, the Voice of America, the CNN, and other international news agencies announced that people were being forced to vote. India has made 700,000 to 800,000 Kashmiris hostages. These poor people have to vote when they are ordered to do so. They [UN] should send peace forces to Kashmir just like they sent to Somalia and Bosnia. The election should be held under the peace force supervision. If the people vote for India, we will give up our campaign. There should be a referendum if an election is not held, to find out what the people there want. If the Kashmiri people vote in favor of India, we will go to our homes quietly and recall the mujaheddin.

[ZINDAGI] Will there be any change in Indian policy on Kashmir?

[Major Mast Gul] All Indian political parties agree on the Kashmir issue and are against Pakistan. Whenever Pakistan is discussed and the prime minister or the defense minister says that they are spending 400 million rupees on Kashmir, the opposition will say, sure spend 500 million rupees but do not lose Kashmir! India is spending 400 million rupees daily on Kashmir. The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] and other parties will not criticize or question this expenditure. [BJP leader Atal Behari] Vajpayee said in one statement that we [Pakistan] treat all people equally bad and do not expect anything nice from anyone. We actually have to fight Narasimha Rao, Vajpayee, and Deve Gowda.

[ZINDAGI] It is said that world powers do not want the Kashmir issue to be resolved.

[Major Mast Gul] The United States wants to make Kashmir an independent nation because this region could be a strong base for the United States to be used against India and China. That is why the United States wants this issue to remain tangled. It has some agents for this purpose whose names I do not want to mention. They say one thing in the United States, something else in Delhi, and something different in the Valley. They want to make Kashmir independent, but this sense; that it becomes another state of the United States of America. It will be able to do whatever it wants by being here. Sardar Qayum is a confirmed US agent. No one has benefitted from U.S. favors as has he.

[Major Mast Gul] Will this problem be resolved if the United States helps Kashmir just like it helped Afghanistan?

[Major Mast Gul] The United States was forced to help Afghanistan as it was afraid of the Soviet danger. Still, wars are not won by weapons. If the Afghans had not been active, the Stinger missiles could not have stopped the Soviet Union. The weapons will not help if we do not have mujaheddin in Kashmir. I say that the United States does not want the mujaheddin to become strong. Hekmatyar in Afghanistan does not allow U.S. interference. The United States wonders why it should make India mad by liberating Kashmir? President Clinton announced that he is so sorry that two U.S. friends are ready to fight each other. In other words, the United States is calling India and Pakistan both its friends. What can we expect from the United

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States after this? Our military is ready for war if only the military generals take some time off from playing golf.

[ZINDAGI] It is said that Pakistani agency Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] is supporting one or two organizations. Is this true?

[Major Mast Gul] I have not seen any organization directed by ISI. Anyhow, if the Pakistani government officially "owns" us, our situation will improve. The Pakistani government, however, has not officially recognized any organization [as officially helping the Kashmiris].

[ZINDAGI] You have been on the front lines. Markazald Awwahilashad is very famous in Pakistan. Can you tell us about him?

[Major Mast Gul] What can I say? A person should only tell the truth. If someone announces that he has killed 50 persons, I have to say that it is impossible to kill 50 soldiers at the same time. If someone says that he has sent severed heads of Indian soldiers to the Indian government as a gift, It cannot be true. You cannot have that kind of time on the front and such actions also would hurt the campaign. When Indian soldiers read such news, they call the mujaheddin liars. I am requesting our associates who make such announcements to stop it as it hurts our campaign.

[ZINDAGI] Will India allow the United States to make Kashmir an autonomous state?

[Major Mast Gul] The United States says that both India and Pakistan are its friends. India will never allow this. India is not being as sycophant to the United States as are we. India is purchasing weapons from Russia openly and we have no relations with Russia. The Indian foreign minister announced that India is buying weapons from Russia and will continue doing so despite the fear of the United States. Yet, the United States establishes the examination results of our [Pakistan's] highest officials who take the civil service examinations. We are slaves and Allah willing we will help the nation rid of this slavery. The campaign that the Jamaat-i-Islami has started is not like Imran Khan's Tehriq-i Insaf. This is Qazi Hussain Ahmed's campaign. The people have experienced [being ruled by the] Muslim League as well as the PPP. The people I meet keep telling me that we are right. Allah willing the time is not far off for a peaceful Islamic revolution. It might happen by an election process or some other way.

[ZINDAGI] Major, you have lived in Charar Sharif and have won major campaigns. What kind of response did you receive from the youth on your return to Pakistan?

[Major Mast Gul] By the grace of Allah, I am loved by the people of Pakistan. If there is a war against India, we will not think who is a member of the Muslim League and who is a member of the PPP; every youth will be involved in the war against India. Our people hate India vehemently. They provide monetary support for us as well as offering their lives. About 13,000 youth have received training in our training centers and a large number of new trainees are arriving. People from all walks of life including students, factory workers, doctors, and engineers are receiving training. That is why we are demanding that the government of Pakistan start a war against India so that the Kashmiris are not humiliated or insulted any more. We have to take concrete steps now. We should not stop at getting some resolutions passed in the United Nations, or sending Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan on a tour, or having Madam Bhutto make a speech. What we need is for the government to mobilize the armed forces. God willing, mujahids like me will be two steps ahead of the military in the war against India. Unfortunately, I am not being allowed even to return [to Indian Kashmir]. The government has put restrictions on me and I am not allowed to cross the border. They tell me that India will be upset if I am allowed to go and Pakistan will suffer notoriety at the international level. I have been besieged in my own country.

[ZINDAGI] Major, are you following Jamaat-i-Islami's policy or Hizbi—Islami's?

[Major Mast Gul] I am following Jamaat-i-Islami's policy. It has announced that we should wage war against India.

[ZINDAGI] In one of your statements, you announced that you were going to destroy the former prime minister. Can you elaborate?

[Major Mast Gul] When Robin Raphael came to visit Pakistan, our government announced that it would close training camps for Kashmiri mujahids in order to make Ms. Raphael happy. I made it clear in a public meeting that I would not allow any person, be it the prime minister or the opposition leader or any leader, interfere in the freedom struggle or the work of the mujahids. It does not matter even if I have to lose my own life. The newspapers changed my statement and published that I "was going to blow up Nawaz Sharif." I am not fighting Nawaz Sharif or Benazir; I am fighting the whole system. The Jamaat-i-Islami wants to change the whole system.

[ZINDAGI] How successful have you been in accomplishing your mission?

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[Major Mast Gul] Very successful. More people are joining us even now. They come to receive training and also provide financial aid to our mujahids. I do not hold political meetings. Still, a large number of people come to listen and express their desire to receive training.

[ZINDAGI] How long were you besieged in Charar Sharif?

[Major Mast Gul] I stayed in Charar Sharif for five and a half months. We took control of that area in December '94 and kept it until May or about five and a half months. The Indian military did not challenge us in December, January, February, and until 6 March. The Pakistani flag flew there until 6 March. When we were besieged, they fired at the flag round the clock and shelled us with mortars burning the whole area. The flag, however, still flew to the last day. They took away that flag when some of the mujahids were killed and the others left. We had controlled about four square miles area.

[ZINDAGI] Did you work for the regular army? If not, why are you called a major?

[Major Mast Gul] I did not join the army. There was a Kashmiri group among the groups that had finished training. Its commander's name was Iltaf and the members of his groups affectionately called him Col. Iltaf. One member of my group, who was killed in battle decided to call me Major. His name was Nadeem and he hailed from Gujrat. The Indian army, however, thinks that I am a Pakistani soldier.

[ZINDAGI] Some people have said that it was not the Indian army but the mujahids themselves who started the fire in Charar Sharif. Can you explain?

[Major Mast Gul] All I will say is that a person who is sitting on a tree limb will not cut it off. If we had set the fire ourselves, how did we get the helicopter? The BBC made a 40-minute television program, saying that Ghulam Rasul is a major leader there. When he returned to Charar Sharif after the disaster to show sympathy with the people, they threw rocks at him. The news media showed him in his injured condition in the photographs. BBC and Zee-TV showed him soaked in blood. The Indian military distributed pamphlets telling the people to vacate the area as they were going to bombard it. First they fired on us and then sprinkled gun powder in the whole area. Later, they set the gun powder on fire. The whole area burned like it was soaked in gasoline. We fought from about 100 or 200 yards for two days.

[ZINDAGI] Do you want to send a message to the Pakistani people, especially the youth?

[Major Mast Gul] I will just tell the young and the old to help our jihad with an open heart. As Irshad Rubani said, "help jihad with your life and property." This should not be just a lip service. Whoever participates in the jihad against India will be a hero and he will be equal to the Prophet's heros who fought against the infidels. Those who become martyrs will go to Heaven. Keeping this mind, I want to tell Pakistani youth that our real enemy is India.

Pakistan: Government Seen Dictatorial

96AS0032D Karachi AKHBAR-E-JEHAN in Urdu 7 Jul 96 p 8

[Editorial: "Political Conflicts and Democratic Propriety"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The encounter between the police and the Jamaat-i-Islami demonstration group that took place last week in Rawalpindi has become "old news" according to newspaper definitions. However, the effects of this incident in which four persons were killed and about 100 injured are still being felt. The Jamaat-i-Islami workers wanted to stage a sit-in against the government in Islamabad, however, the police stopped them in Rawalpindi. The action that started with tear gas ended in firing. The situation became so bad that the army was called to Rawalpindi. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto told the newsmen in the Parliament House lobby the next day that Jamaat-i-Islami's sit-in was an open terrorist act as all the demonstrators were armed and some of them were armed Afghan commandos. She said that anti-democratic forces have plans to create political unrest in the country and were using some organized groups. She said that those arrested in the melee have admitted that they are trained commandos who have fought in Afghanistan and were specially invited here to create chaos.

She said that oppressive powers of dictatorship have planned to overthrow this government within six weeks, but hers' is the dictatorship. Just like in the past, conspiracies are being hatched to use important organizations to cause unrest. She said that she was going to defend Pakistan even if she has to risk her life and government.

The details that national newspapers and magazines published about this sad incident and the prime minister's statement have caused confusion among the people. The same day as Prime Minister Bhutto's statement was published, the federal Home Minister Major General (Retd.) Nasirullah Babar's informal comments that he made to newsmen during the reception given in honor of National Assembly members was also published. The home minister said that Afghans were not involved in the Jamaat-i-Islami demonstration.

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He said that it was trained Pakistanis who had taken part in the Afghan war, not Afghans, who had participated in the demonstration. Additionally, national newspapers had published the prime minister's statement before the Jamaat-i-Islami's demonstration and the opposition leader's call for a nationwide strike. This published statement also claimed that the opposition was trying to present some dead bodies to start instigatory politics. Thus, this was the government's declaration that it was determined to foil the opposition's effort to produce dead bodies. However, the police took over the responsibility of providing dead bodies [by the police firing incident] and nullifying this impression. It is the responsibility of a democratic government to protect and promote democratic institutions and not try to crush them by force. Appealing to the whole nation for a strike or staging a sit-in front of the government offices is the right of opposition parties. It is the same democratic right that the present government and Benazir Bhutto, when they were in the opposition, had demanded and considered their right a few years ago. It would not be improper to say that if the government had not tried to force to make this sit-in ineffective, this demonstration would have ended up as an futile effort. However, in a developing country like Pakistan, the tradition of tolerating opposition with democratic propriety is not very common. Governments also suffer politically because of their attitude, lose popular support, and are a disappointment to their votes. It is unfortunate that they do not learn from such situations. Be it the government or the opposition, all political parties should remember that the purpose of politics is to serve the people and not produce dead bodies.

Pakistan: Bhutto Said To Have 'Fascist Attitude'

96AS0032E Karachi TAKBEER in Urdu 4 Jul 96 pp 5-6

[Editorial: "The Islamabad Tragedy—A Government Conspiracy"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The government has presented the new budget and, while keeping dozens of older taxes, has introduced new taxes to generate 41 billion rupees. Thus, it has burdened the citizens of our country, especially the non-agricultural occupations, with a total of 75 billion rupees. According to government officials, they had no alternative but to impose these taxes. The question is: If the government was forced to do that why does it have to use threats and act arrogantly? When one is forced to do something, one tries to be apologetic. What justification does it have to adopt the "do whatever you want to do to us" attitude? This is not the way a democratic government functions. The never-elected spokesmen of this elected government are issuing statements with "pharaoh-like arrogance" that make the Pakistani people feel insulted. The "elected" members of this government do not have the courage to tell the agents of foreign monetary agencies to shut up.

The whole nation was in turmoil when the budget was presented on 13 June. Voices of protest were raised in every corner of the country. This protest should have been listened to with sympathy and the government officials should have kept a soft spot for assuaging the poor masses. However, the attitude of the bosses of our 'shahs' was worse than that of the shahs themselves. On 17 June, after the prime minister finished her briefing in the Prime Minister House, her economic advisor, Mr. V.A. Jaffery; who has no political, democratic or legal status; told the NAWA-I-WAQT correspondent bluntly, "the present budget is the best and most balanced budget in the present situation. It does not need to be reviewed. The government, therefore, will neither reevaluate the budget nor will it revoke any taxes. The IMF officials have expressed satisfaction over all aspects of the new budget." Qazi Alim Ahmed, another bureaucrat who is the deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, said in response to a question that no changes in development plans will be made during the next fiscal year and no reduction in appropriations will be made (Karachi NAWA-I-WAQT 18 June 96).

This rigid attitude of the former and current bureaucrats shows that they consider themselves to be responsible to the IMF and have nothing to do with the problems faced by the people. For them, satisfaction of the IMF officials is equivalent to receiving a medal for achievement and the protest voices of Pakistani are meaningless. This is the government attitude that has infuriated the opposition. Thus, on 17 June, Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmed, leader of the Jamaat-i-Islami, announced that a sit-in would be staged in front of prime minister's secretariat to protest against this atrocious budget. The people are dying of hunger and the government is insensitive to their cries of help and are dividing up the government treasury among themselves. Opposition leader Nawaz Sharif announced in a press conference held 19 June that a nationwide strike would be observed on Sunday 23 June. He demanded that the government should work with the Parliament and present a new budget. The new taxes for raising 41 billion rupees will break the people's back. The present budget is against the people and this strike will be a referendum against the budget.

Sit-ins and strikes are well-known peaceful ways for political protest and are used in all democratic countries in the world. Denying this kind of right only shows this government's undemocratic and fascist attitude. The government did not hesitate in showing its attitude.

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The prime minister and her home minister issued statements the same day which, instead of creating an atmosphere of collaboration, increased tension. The prime minister in a hostile and vain tone said that the opposition can enjoy its hobby of leading strikes. The people, she said, are discerning and will not sacrifice the country's interest for their personal interest. Yet Home Minister General Babar said, "we will not allow them to take the law in their own hands" (JANG, 20 June 96). This was a clear threat to anyone who wanted to confront the government. No opposition leader has threatened to break any law. Strikes and sit-ins are not illegal activities. These are civil disobedience methods that even the law approves. The premature declaration labeling democratic protest shows that the government wants to use force and wants to stop the people from protesting. The opposition leader has just called for a strike and the home minister has talked about possibilities of terrorist acts. He said that if the opposition took the law in its own hands, the government will also act and a former prime minister (Nawaz Sharif) should not use methods used by terrorists (NAWA-I-WAQT, Karachi, 20 June 96). We could ask the home minister if the prime minister's demand for two years to have a nationwide strike was also a terrorist-like act? Also, were all the strikes hold during the independence movement terrorist acts? The home minister, who seems to be ignorant about history and politics, also seems to ignore the facts.

There was no reduction in the prime minister's self delusion even after 20 June and she was not willing to discuss the ramifications of the appeal for strike seriously. The prime minister said while addressing a meeting in her chamber in the Parliament House, "The opposition has called for strikes in the past also and, just like in the past, this strike will be a total failure." According to her, the people will ignore those who play politics of strikes just like they did in the past, because, as she said, the people are fully aware of their role and the discrepancy in their words and acts. The law minister expressed his opinion that the call for strike by the Muslim League and the Jamaat-i-Islami against the budget was absurd and premature. The opposition instead of showing a democratic attitude by presenting ideas on the budget or a parallel budget has taken the path of destruction and strike. This, the law minister continued, shows the opposition's sick mentality. The people will disregard this call for strike the same way it ignored the call for Train March and "the wheel jam" (JASARAT, Karachi 21 June 1996). The decision of the prime minister and her associates to deal with this situation in this way is based on the delusion that strikes are not an effective tool for confrontation in the 90s; it was effective in the 60s only. They believe that nothing will happen and everything will be alright. The law minister described strikes and sit-ins that the opposition had taken this as the path of destruction and burning. Sit-ins and "gherao" are not the same thing. No opposition leader has appealed to the people to "gherao," burn, and destroy. The government has presumed this about the opposition on its own. It appears that the government wants to make sure these efforts fail by calling them violent and destructive. However, this plan could prove very costly to the government because the people's trust in the government has gone down to zero level.

The announcement for the 24 June sit-in outside the prime minister's secretariat and the call for the nationwide strike on 23 June were made separately by the Jamaat-i-Islami and the Muslim League, both these events were going to take place almost simultaneously. However, on 20 June the Jamaat-i -Islami had also announced support for the Sunday strike and on 21 June the opposition leader announced support for the Jamaat-i-Islami's sit-in scheduled for 24 June. Thus, the two separate dissension plans had become a cooperative effort. Several other political parties also announced their decision to join these protest efforts. That is when the government got worried and baffled. During that time, Muslim League members of the National Assembly and the Punjab Assembly turned in their resignations to Nawaz Sharif and authorized him to take any appropriate action.

The government's tactics, using intimidation and threats, received response in the form of firm announcement made by Qazi Hussain Ahmed in his Friday sermon in the Mansoora Masjid that the protest demonstration would take place come what may and those who tried to stop them will be responsible for any disturbance of peace. Despite this warning, there was no change in the prime minister's power-induced dipsomania. She took this attitude of not bowing to the people's opposition just like her father did in the past and announced on 21 June that she would hold bye-elections if the Muslim League legislators resigned from their seats and that 70 percent of the Muslim League legislators would not resign just to show their support to Nawaz Sharif as they know that facing the court will not be a child's play. The people will ignore his strike just like they ignored the Tehriq-i Nijat (JASARAT AND NAWA-I-WAQT, Karachi 22 June 96).

Against the background of the prime minister's conceited announcement, the changed attitude of the minister for finance showed the people how baffled the government was. He said that if businessmen gave some concrete suggestions, changes in the budget could be made because the prime minister had instructed that the

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demands of businessmen and industrialists should be accepted as much as possible. In response to this mixed message of threats and assurance from the prime minister, Nawaz Sharif said that the government should take the total budget package back. The Sunday strike, he said, was going to give voice to the people as he had come out to protect the people. He called to all that anyone who wants to protest atrocities must come out. He said that Benazir was asking the people to make sacrifices. Should the people make sacrifices so she can import duty free cars for herself and spend 460 million rupees on her one trip to the United States? She buys a mansion in Surrey and then increased taxes on houses by 10 percent. Should the people make sacrifices so that the children from poor families could die weeping and the rulers could send their children to the United States and the United Kingdom for treatment, and build halls worth 900 million rupees?

The opposition has many solid reasons to support this strike while the government has nothing but imaginary ideas and accusations against it. The government's conscience was not clear, that is why the focus of its whole propaganda was to point out that the opposition was bent upon violence and destruction through this strike. The chief minister of Sindh openly stated that the opposition had called the strike to cause destruction and carnage. At the time when the chief minister had made his accusation, no opposition leader has even hinted that there would be violence in the strike and sit-in program.

Only two days before the sit-in and a day before the strike, dozens of Jamaat-i Islami leaders were arrested in several police raids. Three district leaders of Jamaat-i Islami were among the arrested. The banners the Jamaat-i Islami leaders had put up in connection with the sit-in were taken off by government employees. The police also took tents that were pitched there. Various Jamaat leaders warned that Benazir would face a worse fate than her father. According to them, the campaign has started and the workers as well as the leaders of the Jamaat will not retreat now. In response to this firm announcement, the home minister declared that he would not allow the Jamaat-i Islami to start any terrorist activities. If it did not cancel the plan to sit-in outside the prime minister's secretariat, firm action would be taken against them.

The announcement to deal firmly with peaceful protestors and accusing the Jamaat and the Muslim League of terrorism clearly indicates that the government had already planned to use force in order to make these protest efforts look violent. The government's intention was also clear from the prime minister's statement saying that it would be the people who would be hurt by this strike and not the government. She said that the opposition wanted dead bodies in Lahore and Islamabad. General Babar was given instructions to be relentless in dealing with the situation. The prime minister had told the newsmen during her talk with them outside the Parliament House that the taxes will not be reduced (JASARAT, Karachi 23 June 96). It is clear from the government's heartless attitude that the government itself planned to shed blood in Lahore and Islamabad. The Jamaat leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed announced the same day that since the government is determined to shed blood after seeing the reaction of the people, anything that happens will be the government's fault. The same day, Mr. V.A. Jaffery, minister of financial affairs, announced that there is no possibility of reviewing the budget.

The whole series of events shows that God will definitely punish the government for its arrogance and criminal negligence of the people's problems. The strike and the sit-in are not just two actions; these are the beginning of a phase. If the people remain determined, the next phases will be realized. We must, for once, make a concerted effort to establish democratic institutions and get rid of foreign agencies' control. If not, these landlords will simply sell out our country.

Pakistan: Portfolios of Newly Inducted Ministers Announced

BK0108145796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 1 Aug 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Portfolios have been allocated to the federal ministers and ministers of state inducted in the federal cabinet yesterday.

The portfolios of federal ministers are:

Mr. Arbab Mohammad Jahangir — Narcotics Control.
Rao Sikander Iqbal — Sports and Tourism.
Haji Mohammad Nawaz Khokhar — Science and Technology.
Mr. Jahangir Badar — Political Affairs and Religious Affairs.
Chaudhary Abdul Sattar — Industries
Syed Iqbal Haider — Human Rights.
Mr. Asif Ali Zardari — Investment.
Syed Naveed Qamar — Privatization.

The portfolios of ministers of state are:

Haji Mohammad Yaqub Khan — Local Government and Rural Development.
Dr. Mohammad Ayub Jattak — Food.
Sahabzada Mohammad Nazir Sultan — Foreign Affairs.
Chaudhary Nauroz Shakoor Khan — Youth Affairs.
Mirza Mohammad Nasir Baig — Sports.

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Mr. Mohammad Afaq Khan Shahid — Works.
Mr. Mansoor Hussain Wassan — Water.

According to a notification issued in Islamabad today, the minister for interior, narcotics control and federal investigation, retired, Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar, has been redesignated as federal minister for interior and federal investigation.

According to the notification, the federal minister for industries and production, retired, Brigadier Mohammad Asgar, has been redesignated as federal minister for production. Agha Murtaza Poya, Sardar Fateh Muhammad Mohammad Hasni and Mr. Parvez Saleh have been appointed special assistants to the prime minister. According to an official notification, Mr. Pya and Mr. Hasni will have the status of federal minister, while Mr. Saleh that of minister of state.

Pakistan: Budget Termed 'Difficult'

96AS0032C Karachi AKHBAR-E-JEHAN in Urdu 30 Jun 96 p 8

[Editorial: Budget—"What Will the Average Citizen Do?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Though it has been a week and a half since the federal budget was announced, the reaction is still being felt in the whole nation. Such reaction from the opposition, of course, is considered a part of political strategy. We are also seeing objections from the people. Meanwhile the Cabinet's Financial Committee chaired by Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto reviewed this post-budget situation and declared this budget, which is extremely inflated and beyond the nation's resources, to be better than before and realistic! According to our information, the committee was told that the national development budget for the next fiscal year is 500 billion rupees. This money will be broken down into following budget categories: 186.1 billion rupees for repaying loans, 131.4 billion rupees for defense, 16.5 billion rupees for grants, 8.3 billion for social welfare, and 105 billion for developmental projects. The committee was also told that 87 percent of the budget will be used for repaying loans, defense, and welfare. When government salaries and pensions, which are 8 percent of the total budget, are added, the government is left with only 5 percent of the total budget. The Finance Committee of the Cabinet was also told that there is no alternative but to introduce new taxes in this situation. The total budget deficit is 141.6 billion rupees which will be reduced by cuts to 110.8 billion rupees, and new taxes will have to be levied in order to raise about 40 billion rupees. The committee was told that additional resources worth 40.8 billion rupees will be used to bring the deficit down to 4 percent of the GDP. Satisfaction was expressed over the reduction in budget deficit in this meeting chaired by the prime minister.

The government's official satisfaction over the budget is expressed each year. However, it is clear that this does not satisfy the people. The government presented the federal budget in a confusing manner. Within a few days, the news media gave enough information that everyone knew that a new wave of price increases was coming which will wash away the poor and the middle class like rubbish. The sales tax, excise tax, and custom duty that has been increased on hundreds of items will increase daily expenses during the next few days and cause problems for the masses. The salaried group is also worried by the increase in taxes. A leading newspaper used some statistics to show that private sector employees will face an 71 to 171 percent increase in their income taxes. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto also noticed that the allowances paid to private sector employees were liable to be taxed and instructed that these allowances not be taxed. The Central Board of Revenue has issued an memo declaring corporate employees' allowances taxable. The satisfaction that was expressed in the Finance Committee over the reduction in budget deficit could be correct from government's point of view. However, the fact is that the loans that our government takes out at high interest rates result in inflation that makes the reduction in budget deficit ineffectual. This inflation causes an increase in prices all over the country. Another reason for worry is the government's failure to achieve its revenue goals. The figures included in the budget show that the goals for receiving taxes was not met. Compared to last year, the receipts are 8 billion rupees lower. The government does not appear to be serious in reducing expenditure and has not taken any concrete steps to increase resources in order to expand the tax base. The opposition has rejected this budget and demanded that it be recalled. Although it is difficult to accept this demand, the government can take steps on its own to give some relief to the people. Such steps are not embarrassing for an elected democratic government. Instead, these help in political success later. It is necessary that levy of taxes be made fair and steps be taken to protect the masses from increase in prices. In addition, economic measures should be taken that help the people suffering from poverty and backwardness to reduce their problems and not cause them additional worries.

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Pakistan: Islamic System of Education Advocated

96AS0032F Karachi TAKBEER in Urdu 27 Jun 96 p 11

[Analysis by Mohammed Salahuddin: "What Does Making An Educational System Islamic Mean?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Sayyed Fakhar Imam, federal minister of education, has established a commission to change the present educational system into a Islamic system. This is a welcome news and the educators and researchers should provide support to this commission. The whole nation should pray that this great job is accomplished.

The first and the most basic question in this context is: What does the educational system being Islamic mean? Do we want to revise the subject of religion or add new curriculum? Until a clear answer to this basic question is provided, we will not be able to move in the right direction. This is not being done; we have established educational commissions in the past and assigned them this very task. However, the results never have been what we had expected and the situation always was like "sickness worsened after medication was given."

The Sharif Commission was established during Ayub Khan's era, the Nur Khan Commission worked during Yahaya Khan's rule, the Pirzada Commission was formed during Bhutto's time, and President Ziaul Haq organized a commission under Dr. Razuddin Saddiqui's leadership which ended with Zia's death. No report was presented by the last commission, therefore, we cannot comment on its accomplishments. We have reviewed the reports compiled by the other three commissions. Some of the recommendations are practical and others are just for window dressing. The common agreement is on maintaining the old class system in the education. In other words, the structure stays the same; only the color is changed. The party that had raised the slogan of equality also tried to nationalize (or control) educational institutions. The institutions under the British system of education was excluded because the children of landlords and rich leaders were educated there. I told Mumtaz Bhutto at one time that I would be convinced of his desire for equality if he would have his own son and his driver's son educated under one roof. I had the opportunity to enjoy myself seeing Mumtaz Bhutto smile sheepishly. I would like to ask the same question of Education Minister Fakhar Imam and the prime minister. "Are you willing to have your own children go to the same school with the children of your drivers and other employees?" If the answer is in the affirmative, the task of Islamization of education will become easy. If the answer is in the negative and there is vacillation in attitude, then the system will not be Islamic. The first criterion for Islamic education is that it must be non-sectarian and guarantee equal educational opportunity to all children. The education system given to the world by Hazur Ikram through his school did not discriminate among the rich or the poor or middle class. Obedience to Allah, following the Prophet, the final accountability, character, Islamic education, consistent curriculum, free education, total dedication of the teachers, unity of religion and world, and pious environment were the required elements of education. These elements were used in education in the Muslim world since the Caliphate era to the colonial era and from Marrakech to Indonesia. The British, the French, the Dutch, and other European nations changed the educational system here in order to control the natives and also to train them for various jobs. They also started charging tuition which the Muslim world was unaware of for 1200 years. By removing religious education from the curriculum, Muslims were forced to establish separate religious schools and educational institutions were divided into classes. There were vernacular schools and high schools—regular, missionary, public, and schools especially built for the princes. The education was segregated, divided among ranks, had different tutions, had different cultural backgrounds, and different ranks of schools depending on the social status of parents. One groups was taught to rule and the other groups was taught to be ruled. This educational system split a united people and was based on the policy of division. Meanwhile, religious schools were divided into classes. These confronted the new culture and its supporters on one side and also was the cause of religious Muslims fighting with each other. Thus, the components of our society were dispersed and the distance between the ideology and practice began to increase.

When we got independence, it was necessary to end this educational system based on class system and to establish an educational system that was based on the unity of religion and the world and the one that met the demands of modern times. However, the privileged class and the international forces that wanted to maintain control using their language and culture protected the present system. The domains of religion and worldliness also persisted and the rule and control by the upper class not only continued but also increased with time. The black bosses replaced the white bosses. The nation that had won on the political front was defeated on the cultural and educational fronts. Just like the caste system of the Hindus, we also have lower and upper castes now. These are based on ethnicity, as well as on education, economic status, and culture.

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Now the real test of those who want to make our education Islamic is to see if they have the strength to break the class system and follow equality as the Islamic system demands. It is not necessary to make all buildings equal or tear down the existing buildings. All we need is to have equal status. If English is necessary for modern subjects, then the whole nation should have access to it. What is the logic behind teaching "higher" and "lower" English? Why should we teach British, American, Singapore, or local types of English? All claims to make our educational system Islamic are baseless until this class system from education is removed. Islam does not limit education to a specific group; it is the right of every Muslim man and woman. It is the duty of the government to provide equal educational opportunity to all Muslim children and to make the whole society responsible for it. Dividing education among classes is unjust and against providing education according to one's ability. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Fakhar Imam should keep that in mind from the beginning. Only then this project will go in the right direction and achieve its goal.

Pakistan: 'Vicious Cycle of Corruption' Seen

96AS0032B Lahore NIDA-E-KHILAFAT in Urdu 10 Jun 96 p 3

[Editorial: "Controlling Corruption"]

[FBIS Translated Text] According to the latest news reports, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has rejected the opposition's idea of establishing an inquiry commission. She does not want to create problems for herself. Asghar Khan's statement also decorated newspaper pages the same day. He said that the majority of assembly members are criminals who devour 100 billion rupees from the budget each year. He expressed concern over frequent foreign trips taken by Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan and Maulana Fazal-ul Rehman. He accused the two venerable gentlemen of returning from abroad loaded with diamonds and gems in gifts. God help us! This has strengthened our suspicion that our "venerable" legislators are not only involved in looting our national budget and other corrupt activities but also have left all other groups behind in this area.

There are reasons why Pakistan is considered one of the most corrupt nations in the world. The truth is that no part of our nation is considered unsullied when it comes to corruption. However, involvement of our top politicians and legislators who [supposedly have] the pious duty of representing the people is a serious cause of concern. This is symptomatic of "a dying nation's old age" and is a danger signal for our nation's existence. In the chapter on Israel, there is a description of societies that are ordered by Allah to be destroyed: "When we want to destroy a society, we give full freedom to the leaders of that society to be involved in corruption and adultery so that they deserve the fury of the law. Then we decimate that society." [original in Arabic] Does not this description portray our present society? May Allah protect us from such misfortune. Amin!

It is usually believed that the root cause of all problems in our country is the landlord system left by the British, and the Western economic system based on interest. Therefore, our national problems would be solved if we ended these two. However, the increase in financial corruption, bribery, graft and deception during recent years have made the landlord and interest systems look pale in comparison. Now the question is not one of some system being bad or good but one of our society openly looting us.

In this context, it would be premature to say if the opposition was really serious about its demand for an inquiry commission or was just pulling a political stunt. We can, however, say with confidence that if the government had accepted this idea, there would have been no positive results. There is no dearth in our government of inquiry commissions. A department to curb graft was established soon after Pakistan came into existence. This department is still there. At the federal level, we also have the inspector general offices at state level are busy in this area. Then, above them all, we have the judiciary branch. The total effect of their actions is in front of us. Yet the government does not want to take the risk of establishing an inquiry commission! The action of the people in power indicates that their own hands are not clean. They have guilty consciences.

The truth is that as a nation we are stuck in a wicked and vicious cycle. The best we can say is that at times this cycle accelerates and other times, it slows down. This wicked cycle was started by the ineffective government system imposed on us since the establishment of Pakistan. The abominations of this system have been emerging in various forms. The situation has reached such extremes in the last 50 years that our society has decayed. There seems to be no other alternative but action on a revolutionary footing. If someone thinks that this system can be changed without a dedicated and forthright revolutionary approach then he is not only suffering from self-delusion but also is guilty of deception. The writing is on the wall, requiring that we take off the tinted glasses of wishful thinking. Yet, if someone insists on staying blind on purpose, we cannot cure him.

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